

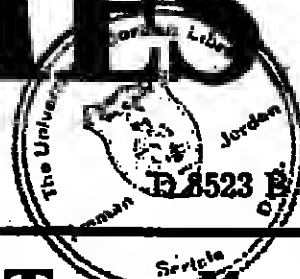
# FINANCIAL TIMES

EUROPE'S BUSINESS NEWSPAPER

Tuesday February 11 1986

Rebuke for Ottawa's policies by money markets, Page 5

No. 29,852



World news Business summary

## Tehran launches Gulf war offensive

Iran has launched a major, two-pronged offensive in the Gulf War, its first for 11 months. Last night it said its forces had reached the Iraqi west bank of the Shatt al-Arab waterway.

Iran said hundreds of Iraqi tanks and vehicles had been captured or destroyed. Iraq, meanwhile, said it had halted the advance's momentum and inflicted heavy casualties.

Page 4

## Shcharansky swap

Anatoly Shcharansky, the Soviet dissident, is to be released today by the Soviet Union in an East-West prisoner exchange on 'Glasnost' Bridge, connecting West Berlin and East Germany. Page 3

## Haiti elections

Haiti's new military ruler, Lt Gen Henri Namphy, pledged to hold general and presidential elections and formally banned the infamous Tonton Macoute militia. US presses Haiti, Page 5

## EI AI protection

Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Israel could protect its EI AI airline flights against threatened Libyan interception without help from the US. Greece has agreed to re-route some EI AI flights to counter the threat.

## Peres dispute

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres has sparked a political dispute by arguing in favour of granting more local powers to the 1.5m Arabs in the occupied West Bank. Page 4

## Mandela 'delay'

Winnie Mandela, wife of jailed black nationalist leader Nelson Mandela, dampened speculation that he was about to be released and said he may well be freed in the middle of the year. South African deaths: Page 4

## Indian prices protest

Protests over price rises paralysed New Delhi as more than 1,300 people were arrested. The Press Trust of India said more than 1,300 people were arrested.

## Helicopter crashes

A French army helicopter with 14 people aboard crashed in stormy weather off Corsica. Port officials held little hope of finding survivors.

## Party's progress

An Irish political party founded only seven weeks ago could win 25 per cent of the vote if elections were held now, according to an opinion poll. Background, Page 2

## Polish draft plan

A draft political programme covering the Polish Communist Party up to the end of the century has been reaffirmed support for the country's decentralising reforms. Page 2

## Ball for banker

Count Ferdinand von Galen, the banker facing charges over the near-collapse of West Germany's SBC bank, is to be released on bail of DM 10m (\$4.2m). Page 5

## UN efforts praised

UN efforts to bring about a peace settlement in Cyprus were praised by Cypriot President Spyros Kyprianou and Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu.

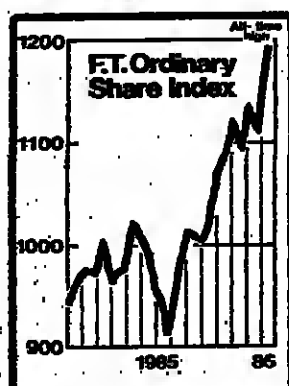
## Print union fined

The UK print workers' union Sogat 32 was fined £25,000 (\$35,000) by the High Court and an order was made for the sequestration of its £17m funds over the union's dispute with Rupert Murdoch's News International.

## Vantona steps in with \$1bn Coats bid

COATS PATONS, the Scottish textiles group which last week agreed to a takeover bid by Dawson International, has changed its mind and agreed to a rival £734m (\$1.03bn) offer from Vantona. Vantona, the world's biggest fibres-to-clothing group with annual sales of £1.2bn. Page 24

WALL STREET: The Dow Jones industrial average closed 12.96 up at 1,628.32. Page 46



## Thatcher supporters rally to quell Tory dissension

SUPPORTERS of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher yesterday tried to calm the feverish, nervous mood of Conservative MPs after a week-end of open clashes between ministers about the British Government's future strategy and style, writes Peter Riddell, Political Editor, in London.

Conservative MPs and ministers returning to Westminster yesterday acknowledged the damaging impact which the current airing of differences is having, both on the Government and on Mrs Thatcher's own authority, further fuelling speculation about her leadership.

The official line is that Mrs Thatcher is not going to change her style or way of running the Government and that she intends to carry on as Prime Minister well into a next term.

After seeing Mrs Thatcher yesterday, Mr Norman Tebbit, the Conservative Party chairman, said he thought 'as soon as the party settles down, its prospects will be enormously good. It needs to get on with the business of governing, selling our policies and exposing to the public what are the policies of the opposition.'

Both Mr Tebbit and Lord Young, the Employment Secretary, sought to minimise the extent of disagreement in weekend speeches by Mr Peter Walker, the Energy Secretary, Mr John Biffin, leader of House of the Commons, and Mr Michael Heseltine, the former Defence Secretary.

Dr David Owen, the Social Democratic Party leader, said it had been 'one of the most damaging week-ends that the Conservative party has had since the Profumo affair in 1963.' But he believed that the Conservatives' hard instinct would be asserting itself very hard, while Mrs Thatcher still had the heart strings of the activists. He thought there would be a move for unity and to stop the recent dissension.

After the extraordinary events of recent weeks, there could be a lull as Mrs Thatcher and her allies, including sympathetic backbenchers, try to stabilise the position and rally support.

However, such is the uncertainty and doubt among Conservative MPs that some experienced figures now believe that the present condition is unstable, and that Mrs Thatcher's position could again come under question after a by-election for a vacant Conservative seat at Fulham, London, and elections in May for local councils. The Conservatives are gloomy about both.

Moreover, Conservative spirits would not be improved by a survey of four marginal constituencies which, when roughly translated on to a national basis, puts Labour in the lead at 39 per cent, the Alliance

at 33 per cent and the Tories at 27 per cent.

Mr David Steel, the Liberal leader, claimed that this indicated yet again that the most probable outcome of the next election is a parliament in which no party has a majority. The election must be held by June 1988.

The arguments among ministers cover both presentation and policy and many ministers share Mr Biffin's view that Conservative leaders, and in particular Mr Tebbit, need to avoid being raucous and aggressive in order to win uncommitted voters and potential alliance supporters.

It is clear that Mrs Thatcher's al-

lies were irritated by Mr Biffin's words and were trying to present him as a slightly eccentric figure not quite in politics and fond of sending rather detached letters. Mr Tebbit yesterday sought to shrug off Mr Biffin's warning by claiming that it was directed at the Labour party. Mr Biffin's letter was explicitly addressed to his own constituency party.

The Government faces continuing pressure over the Westland helicopter affair and the cross-party Defence Select Committee will meet today to consider whether to recall witnesses in view of serious allegations made last week by Mr Heseltine.

## Marcos set to retain power as claims of fraud intensify

BY CHRIS SHERWELL AND SAMUEL SENOREN IN MANILA

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos appears certain to retain power under the rules of last Friday's presidential election, but popular protests at alleged fraud have begun to intensify.

Thousands of shouting people crowded outside the National Assembly, under the eye of steel helmeted police last night, as assembly members began the official count of election returns.

In Manila's business district, a young supporter of Mrs Corason Aquino, Mr Marcos' opponent, was shot dead by a sniper. He was part of a large opposition group travelling to the assembly.

Two unofficial 'big counts' of Friday's votes continued to return different running totals. The Commission on Election (Comelec), said Mr Marcos was leading, while the competing National Movement for Free Election (Namrel) put Mrs Aquino ahead.

Mr Marcos said yesterday both organisations will continue their count, despite the start of the assembly's official count. Comelec officials said a walkout by technicians on Sunday, apparently in protest at alleged manipulation of its count, was an 'opposition plot'.

Assembly members in Mr Marcos' ruling New Society Movement (KBL) confirmed yesterday that the president would be expected to win Friday's election. Opposition challenges of the election return would be voted down by the KBL and Mr Marcos would be proclaimed victor.

Only then would Mrs Aquino be able to contest the outcome through the Presidential Election Tribunal, a nine-member body consisting of three KBL members, three opposition MPs and three supreme court justices appointed by Mr Marcos.

Yesterday's session became bogged down in procedural argument. The count is expected to take longer than a week and the whole process could last months.

The shooting in Manila took the death toll in the election campaign to 94 since December 6 and 43 since polling began last Friday.

A US Congressional delegation, meanwhile, reported 'disturbing' efforts to undermine the electoral process, but in his comments, Senator Richard Lugar, its co-head, was more restrained than in previous days. 'Clean in its absolute form is obviously not an appropriate word to describe what we have observed,' he said.

Feature, Page 23

## US urges two sides to work together

BY REGINALD DALE, US EDITOR, IN WASHINGTON

THE WHITE HOUSE yesterday expressed concern about allegations of election fraud to the Philippines and called on both sides to 'work together to form a viable government without violence.'

While the White House declined to comment on the possible outcome, it appeared to be suggesting that President Ferdinand Marcos must somehow accommodate the opposition with the kind of political, economic and military reforms that the US has long been demanding.

At the same time, Mr Larry Speakes, the White House spokesman, appeared to be appealing to Mrs Corason Aquino, the opposition candidate, to work with Mr Marcos and not to condone violent demonstrations, if he continues to cling to power.

Mr Speakes added, however, that he was not suggesting that the election should result in a coalition government. 'The basis exists for a strong, two-party system,' he said.

Nevertheless, the continuing electoral confusion clearly risks undermining one of the Reagan Administration's main policy objectives - the hope that the poll would produce a winner with a clear enough mandate to introduce the needed reforms.

Before the elections, US officials said that they did not mind who won, provided that the winner moved swiftly to revamp the armed forces in their fight against the Communist insurgency and to restore genuine free enterprise to the economy.

Washington believes that, only if such reforms are undertaken, will it be possible to restore prosperity, contain the insurgency and maintain security for the strategic US military bases. Free and fair elections were meant to be the first of the reforms.

The original expectation in Washington was that Mr Marcos would win the elections easily enough not to have to indulge in massive manipulation of the results. Washington could then try to persuade him that he had a mandate for change and try to set genuine reforms in motion. In any case, he might soon leave office because of ill-health.

The problem now is that, if Mr Marcos manages to maintain his hold on power, it will hardly be possible to claim that he has a popular mandate. It will also be extremely difficult for the US to come to his aid because of the extent of electoral fraud and manipulation that is believed to have occurred.

Senator Richard Lugar, the leader of the US team of election observers, is due to report to President Ronald Reagan today. But he has already made clear that he has grave doubts about many aspects of the poll.

Mr Reagan has promised increased US aid for the Philippines, but only if the elections were 'credible'.

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Continued on Page 24

## European grouping's Westland bid fails

By Lionel Barber in London

THE BATTLE over the future of Westland, the ailing British helicopter group, appeared to have swung in favour of the board's favoured rescue plan from Sikorsky and Fiat last night after the rival European aerospace consortium declared its tender offer to shareholders void.

The tender offer of 130p a share was aimed at blocking the Sikorsky/Fiat rescue plan which will be put to the vote at a shareholders' meeting in London tomorrow.

But the tender, which required at least 20.2 per cent support from shareholders to take effect, drew a disappointing response. It is understood that it attracted shareholders speaking for less than 8 per cent of Westland's equity.

Sir John Cuckney, Westland's chairman, declined to comment on the failure of the consortium's tender or on the prospects for the Sikorsky/Fiat plan which requires a simple majority vote.

Yesterday Sir John met with M&G, the British fund management group holding 7.5 per cent of Westland's shares.

Mr David Home, managing director of M&G, said the group would be prepared to sell would still receive 130p a share for their shares.

The tender response from small shareholders took some market observers by surprise. At 130p a share, the tender was priced between 10p and 20p above the prevailing market price over the past two weeks. Westland shares closed yesterday at 110p, unchanged from Friday.

One of the main reasons for the failure of the tender was the decision by two European consortium supporters, Mr Alan Briskow (17 per cent) and United Scientific Holdings (5 per cent) not to offer all or part of their shareholding. This would have taken the consortium over the critical 20.2 per cent mark.

By yesterday afternoon, the Westland board and its advisers Leonard Brothers had counted the votes and found the rescue plan from Sikorsky, the US helicopter maker, and Fiat of Italy. The response is believed to have been encouraging.

According to calculations within the rival camps, the consortium speaks for about 28 per cent of Westland. Sikorsky/Fiat can speak for just under 30 per cent.

The balance rests with M&G and small shareholders. M&G has made it clear that it would prefer to see a takeover bid launched either by Sikorsky or by the consortium which comprises British Aerospace and GEC of the UK, Aerospatiale of France, Agusta of Italy and Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm of West Germany.

M&G has voiced disquiet about the decision by Sikorsky to buy shares in Westland at premium market prices in an effort to swing tomorrow's vote.

## \$ at eight-year low against yen

BY GEORGE GRAHAM IN LONDON

THE DOLLAR fell yesterday to its lowest level against the yen since 1978. After an early slide in the Far East the dollar remained weak throughout the day, also losing ground against European currencies.

After breaking through the psychological barrier of ¥190 the dollar slipped at one point to ¥187.75. It recovered to end the day in London at ¥188.15.

The yen has risen strongly since finance ministers from the Group of Five major industrial nations agreed in New York last September to take concerted action to bring down the value of the dollar. Since then it has gained more than 27 per cent against the dollar, faster than the other major currencies.

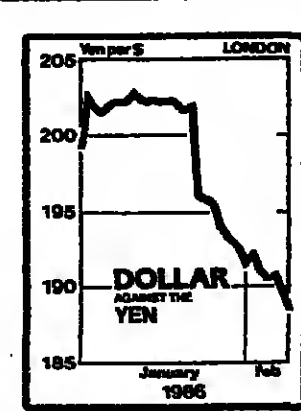
In the last two weeks it has advanced further from an exchange rate above ¥200 to the dollar, despite a cut in the official Bank of Japan discount rate. Last week, how-

ever, Mr Satoshi Sumita, Governor of the Bank of Japan, said he felt the yen had been rising 'a little too fast'.

Brokers said foreign exchange trading had been thin yesterday as a result of Chinese new year holidays in Far Eastern markets and today's holidays in Japan and West Germany. Dealers were also nervous that central banks might intervene to slow the dollar's fall against the yen.

Sterling remained stable yesterday, gaining 1 cent against the dollar but losing ground against European currencies.

Alexander Nicoll in London writes: An urgent call for the pound to join the exchange rate pegging mechanism of the European Monetary System came in London last night from Mr Wilfrid Guth, chairman of the supervisory board of Deutsche Bank, West Germany's largest bank.



In a speech to the European Atlantic Group at the House of Commons, he said Britain would benefit because the pound would fluctuate less and the burden of defending it when necessary would be shouldered by central banks within the system.

The advantages to be gained by Britain and its partners, including greater stabilisation of the international monetary system, would outweigh the difficulties which could be caused by the pound's vulnerability to oil price fluctuations, Mr Guth said.

Money markets, Page 39

## Paris plan to steady currencies

BY DAVID HOUSSÉO IN PARIS

PROPOSALS for achieving more stability in the foreign exchange markets by gradually moving from co-ordinated intervention by central banks to a system of setting target zones for the major currencies, have been outlined by Mr Daniel Lebeque, Director of the French Treasury.

The proposals come in the wake of President Ronald Reagan's recent expression of interest in the convening of an international monetary conference and at a time when French officials sense a fresh openness in the US Treasury to ideas that might contribute to prolonging the dollar's 'soft landing'.

The proposals are likely to be the first steps in an increasingly intensive French lobbying over promoting exchange rate stability in advance of the April meeting of the IMF's interim committee which is due to discuss currency issues. The exchange rate question is also expected to be on the agenda of the Tokyo summit of industrialised nations in May.

French officials believe that a more substantive mechanism is needed to ensure more stability in the foreign exchange markets than the current de facto intervention of central banks. But they do not go so far as advocating a return to a system of fixed exchange rates.

Mr Lebeque proposes in a paper that reflects official French thinking that reference zones for the major currencies could initially be set in consultation between ministers of finance and central bank govern-

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In an initial stage, the zones of reference would be kept confidential and allow for a wide margin of 5 to 10 per cent from a central value. Officials of the major countries would consult over any significant deviation.

Later on, Mr Lebeque proposes the system would have to incorporate restrictive measures to ensure that currencies remained within their reference zones. Such measures could range from publicity to financial penalties.

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Continued on Page 24

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## NEW POLITICAL PARTY LEAPS TO PROMINENCE

### Irish bandwagon takes off at speed

BY HUGH CARNERY IN DUBLIN

"I BELIEVE that Irish politics must be transformed. Experience tells me that no such transformation will come from within the existing parties. It must come from outside. There must be a new beginning."

When Mr Desmond O'Malley, a former cabinet minister expelled from the opposition Fianna Fail party, launched his Progressive Democrats with those words last December 21 he could scarcely have imagined the speed with which the public would respond.

Less than two months later, Mr O'Malley has three colleagues alongside him in the Dail, a membership of 14,000 and in the latest of a series of startling advances that have transformed the Irish political equation within a matter of weeks, his party was placed ahead of the main government party in an opinion poll published yesterday.

The poll, conducted for the Irish Times by the Market Research Bureau of Ireland, gave the Progressive Democrats, or "Progs" as they are becoming known, 25 per cent of the popular vote, two points ahead of Fine Gael, led by Dr Garret FitzGerald, the Prime Minister. Mr Charles Haughey's Fianna Fail still led the field with 42 per cent, but, like Fine Gael, it suffered a marked slide since the last poll in November. Support for the Labour Party, Fine Gael's coalition partner since 1982, had collapsed to 4 per cent.

On the basis of yesterday's poll, Mr O'Malley reckoned his party could win as many as 41 of the Dail's 166 seats at the next election due sometime next year. That may yet turn



Mr O'Malley: "There must be a new beginning."

out to be over-optimistic, but certainly most of the political talk in Dublin now is of whether Fianna Fail can any longer win an outright majority and of the prospects for a Fine Gael Progressive Democrat coalition.

Mr O'Malley, a 47-year-old solicitor from Limerick, was thrown out of Fianna Fail last March for refusing to vote against a Bill liberalising contraceptive laws. His departure ended a long period of disaffection with Mr Haughey's leadership.

He went ahead with the new party when he was joined by Miss Mary Harney (32), a Dublin MP expelled from Fianna Fail, for voting in favour of the Anglo-Irish agreement on Northern Ireland.

The momentum behind them was greatly boosted when two more Fianna Fail MPs resigned in November, joining them in mid-January. They were Mr Pearse Wyse,

from Cork, and Mr Bobby Molloy, a front-bencher from Galway.

As the bandwagon has gathered speed, crowds of up to 3,000 have attended public meetings in Cork, Galway, Dublin and Limerick. Some 2,000 packed Dublin's Mansion House in late January. The audience ranged across all age groups, though most looked to be in the middle- to upper-income bracket. Party officers say 40 per cent of members are women, about one-third have no previous involvement in politics and those that have divide evenly between former Fine Gael and former Fianna Fail supporters.

The Mansion House audience appeared thoughtful and critical, but enthusiastically applauded most of the main planks of the Progressive Democrat message.

A key part of this is the desire to get away from "Civil War politics," a reference to the roots of Fine Gael and Fianna Fail. Fine Gael were the "Free Staters" who worked within the 1920 Act which partitioned Ireland. Fianna Fail grew out of Sinn Féin which fought bitterly and bloodily against the Free State Government for accepting partition.

To this day, Fine Gael and Fianna Fail are split far less by left-right ideological differences than by their different nationalist traditions, a trait which the Progressive Democrats feel alienates many young people.

Mr O'Malley drew a keen response to his passionate advocacy of spending cuts and free enterprise policies that would see a drastic reduction in the role of the state and an

emphasis on wealth creation. The Irish "look to the state as the place of first refuge rather than one of last resort... the direction in which we should now aim is to reduce our level of dependency on the state," he said.

Spousal of such "New Right" economics is central to the Progressive Democrats, but in the end they may not prove overly popular.

However, the party's appeal to the young especially is immensely enhanced by Miss Harney whose forthright style and call for compassionate social policies balances Mr O'Malley's economic conservatism.

The image of the party as an anti-Haughey Fianna Fail splinter group could yet limit its support, but the rush of public support from all sides seems to have lessened this danger. They would still like to attract a top-line Fine Gael figure to their ranks, though.

Like the Social Democrats (SDP) in Britain, the party is benefitting now from widespread disillusion with the poor economic performance of the two main parties, but may struggle when the euphoria wanes and wrangling over detailed policymaking begins.

Unlike the SDP, though, the Progressive Democrats know that, under Ireland's system of proportional representation, they are assured of a representation in the Dail consistent with their share of the vote. That knowledge gives Mr O'Malley and his team an extra edge of confidence and equally has sent a tremor of apprehension through the old parties.

## Polish party plan backs reforms

By Christopher Bellfield in Warsaw

A DRAFT political programme for the Polish Communist Party up to the end of the century which is to be approved by June has reaffirmed support for the country's decentralising economic reforms.

It assumes that a falling wage-price, - exchange of raw materials, and the continuing burden of servicing the large foreign debt all make the shift to a more efficient economy vital.

The programme reiterates with some force that wage differentials must be widened to reward efficient production, and it even quotes Lenin to defend hardening criticism on this issue. This is one of the more contentious questions facing the Government which maintains that the majority of the population wants a more equal distribution of income and is thus opposed to the reforms.

The economy's structure is assumed to evolve towards technologically advanced manufacturing industry at the expense of raw materials' extraction and heavy industry.

As for agriculture, the programme seeks to soothe the fears of private farmers by mentioning the development of larger private family farms.

Small-scale private business, by comparison, fares less well, with only perfunctory mention in the programme which speaks of strengthening the state sector. This contrasts with the view of many economists who feel that expansion of the private sector could plug many supply gaps.

## Voest-Alpine rethinks Oki microchip venture

BY PATRICK BLUM IN VIENNA

VOEST-ALPINE, Austria's state-owned steel, engineering, electronics and trading group, is to re-examine its plans to establish a large joint-venture microchips factory in Austria with Oki Electric Industry of Japan, the company said yesterday.

The \$285m deal was signed last May by Voest and Oki and was heralded as a breakthrough by the Austrian group in attracting high-technology investment in Austria.

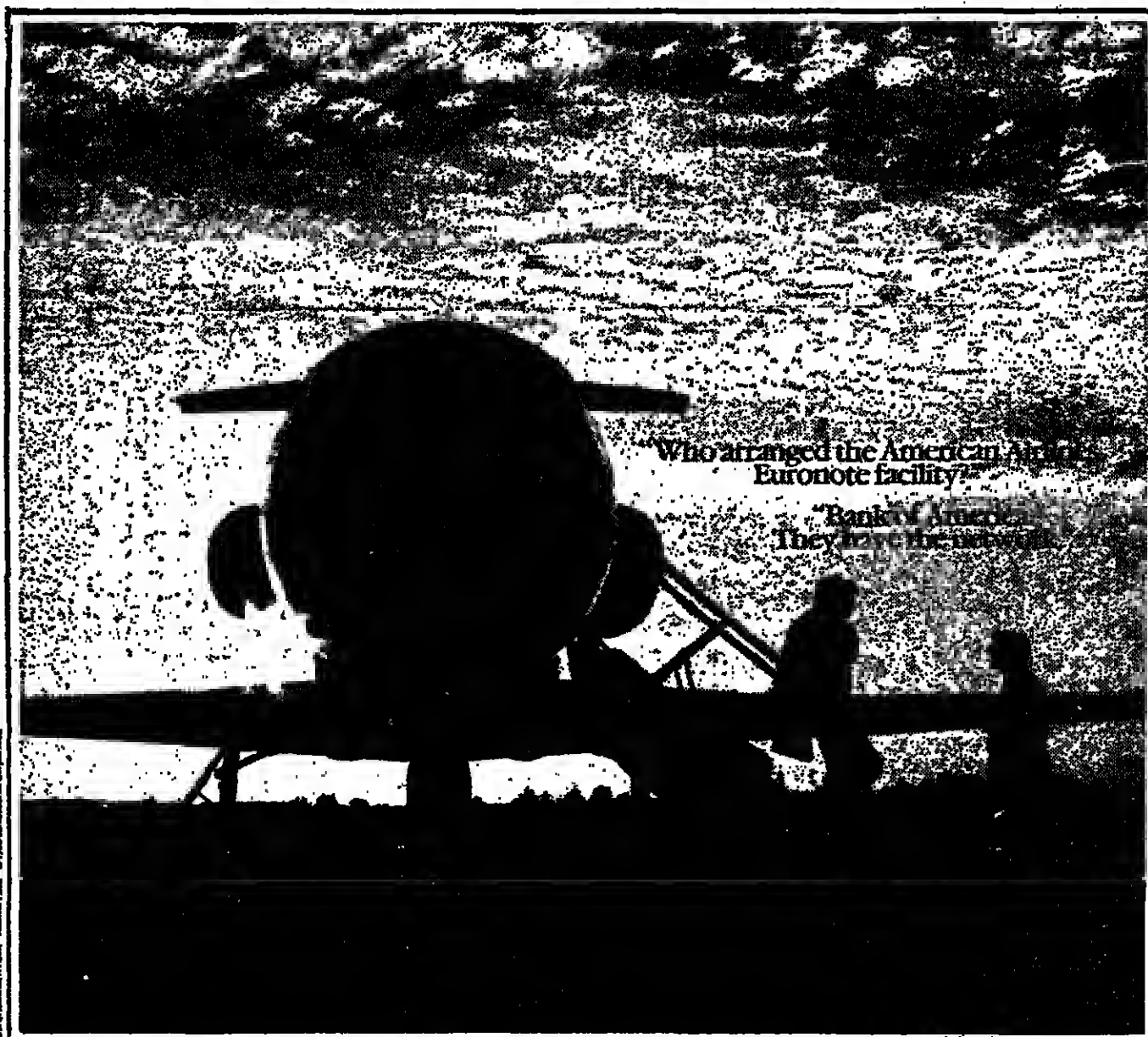
The deal, however, "been plagued by bad luck, and its future became uncertain after the local council where the plant was to be built unexpectedly refused planning permission. Voest's recent financial difficulties put a further question mark over the project. In November, the group announced record losses of Sch 5.7bn

(\$335m) due in large part to speculation on the oil market by its trading subsidiary.

The scale of the losses shocked ministers and public opinion and the group's chief executive and board of management were forced to resign. A temporary chief executive has been appointed but the group still lacks a management board.

The Government has made clear that new subsidies for the company will be made available only when the new management sets out a full re-organisation plan for the group. In the meantime, projects such as the one with Oki have been set aside.

Mr Rudolf Kirchwagner, Voest's temporary chief executive, said yesterday that the original deal had expired.



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Published by The Financial Times (Europe) Ltd., President: Bruce Brundage, Managing Director: F. H. Brown, R.A.J. McCann, C.P.S. Dunn, M.C. Gorman, D.E.F. Palmer, London. Printer: Frankfurt-Société, Druckerei-Gesellschaft, Frankfurt/Main. Responsible Editor: C.P.S. Dunn, Smith, Frankfurt/Main. Circulation: 54,800 Frankfurt am Main, 1.0 The Financial Times Ltd, 1985.

FINANCIAL TIMES, USPS No. 100-661, published daily except Sundays and holidays. U.S. subscription rates: \$25.00 per annum. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: send address changes to FINANCIAL TIMES, 215 West 37th Street, New York, N.Y. 10018.

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## EUROPEAN NEWS

## Italy's employers see chance of big drop in inflation

BY JAMES SUTTON IN ROME

THE FALL in the world oil price gives Italy an unrepeatable chance to achieve a big drop in inflation without penalising growth or putting the balance of payments at risk.

This is the view of Confindustria, the Italian private sector employers' association. In a study by its research department it says that the lower oil price should make it possible for Italy to bring its inflation rate down from last year's 8.6 per cent to the Government's target of 6 per cent this year

without the sacrifice of other policy objectives.

The Confindustria report came as Italy's Government statistics bureau reported that Italy had a record trade deficit in 1985 totalling 123,023bn (110.18bn), compared with a deficit of 119,135bn in 1984. In December, the trade deficit was 11,940bn compared with a deficit of 13,000bn the previous month. Imports in 1985 rose by 16.6 per cent and exports by 16 per cent.

Informal estimates suggest that a crude oil price of about \$20 per barrel and a lira-dollar rate of L1,600 would cut about 1,100,000bn of Italy's trade deficit this year. The same factors ought to put the current account into equilibrium this year, compared with a deficit for last year estimated at around L10,000bn.

Confindustria says that not only should the government meet its inflation target, but it should be able to do so while ensuring gross domestic product growth of about 2.5 per cent, compared with an estimated 2 per cent achieved last year.

Previously, Confindustria thought the inflation rate decline could not have been achieved without some slowing of GDP growth. Alternatively, if growth had been preserved, then the balance of payments would have suffered.

It goes on to say that if the trend of wages follows the course the Government has set for it, and if public spending keeps to lines laid down in the new Finance bill for this year, then inflation could actually fall below the target.

However, Confindustria warns that the Italian economy needs structural improvements when it is considered that equilibrium on the balance of payments would only just be achieved this year in highly favourable external circumstances. Italy, it says, has tended to import too much in recent years, while its exports have just held their ground on foreign markets.

## OECD says Norway oil tax revenues could be halved

BY DAVID LENNON

THE NORWEGIAN government's revenues from oil taxes are expected to be halved this year as the sharp drop in oil prices hits the sector which accounts for half of the country's export earnings.

A price of less than \$20 for a barrel of oil would test the degree to which the Norwegians are able to maintain their record economic performance of recent years.

The recovery since 1983 was originally export-based but then spread to domestic demand, although that was clearly fuelled by the oil revenues which are now falling.

However, all is not lost according to the latest Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report on the Norwegian economy. Though most of its findings, and certainly most of its predictions, will have to be amended as a result of the latest events in the oil market, it does have something to offer with regard to the rest of the economy.

Referring to the economic recovery which began in 1983, the report notes that "a favourable feature is the performance of the traditionally weak manufacturing sector, where output, productivity and investment have revived markedly."

The OECD overview noted that output growth is likely to continue in the near-term, and unemployment, a major issue for the government, should remain low.

But it goes on to warn that "strong growth and low unemployment by international comparison owe much to expansionary demand management policies made possible by growth."

Current estimates show that the fall in oil prices may have a disastrous impact on the trade balance. In 1984 Norway enjoyed a surplus of Nkr 45bn (13.7bn). With oil and gas, it would have suffered a deficit of Nkr 35bn.

## Shcharansky release confirmed

THE RELEASE today of Mr Anatoly Shcharansky, the 38-year-old Soviet dissident, was confirmed yesterday. He is to be released by the Soviet Union in a long-awaited East-West prisoner exchange on Glienicke Bridge connecting West Berlin and East Germany, writes Leslie Collett in Berlin.

A spokesman for the US mission here said the exchange at midday would include five people on either side. Apart from Mr Shcharansky, they were understood to be imprisoned Eastern and Western agents. The Jewish dissident was accused of spying for the CIA, and Moscow only agreed to his release in the context of a spy swap.

Vehicles from both sides carrying the prisoners are expected to drive to the middle of the bridge where the exchange will take place. The US spokesman said Mr Shcharansky will be flown out of West Berlin from Tempelhof US air base. His destination is understood to be Tel Aviv.

## Commission presses for youth exchanges

The European Commission wants to spend Ecu 30m (£19m) between 1987 and 1989 on stimulating youth exchanges among countries of the EEC, writes Paul Cheeswright in Brussels. The idea is to build up a sense of the European identity, so the Commission, to continue the jargon, wants exchanges to stress the European dimension.

If the 12 agree, 80,000 young Europeans would spend at least a week in a country other than their own finding out how other people do things. More limited programmes exist. There is an exchange programme for young workers and the Commission grants study awards—2,000 last year.

## European counterpart to Star Wars urged

By Bridget Bloom, Defence Correspondent

BRITAIN SHOULD join its European allies to promote a European counterpart to the controversial US Star Wars programme, or Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), a leading British defence academic argues in a monograph published yesterday.

Mr David Greenwood, head of the Centre for Defence Studies at Aberdeen University, argues that rather than conclude a formal agreement to participate in the SDI programme, Britain should be part of a new initiative for the defence of Europe, a defence system designed to counter missiles posing a direct threat to Europe.

Europe will need protection from short or medium-range ballistic or cruise missiles and high-performance aircraft. Research and development spending already incorporated into the defence budgets could be firmly oriented to providing such defences collectively, Mr Greenwood says.

Such a European effort to match the SDI would be smaller in scope and scale than the US programme, to which it would be complementary—thus possibly also attracting funds from the US.

But it could provide a powerful impulse to technological advance—within Europe. It would be less divisive within the alliance, and less prone to the problems of technology transfer than bilateral participation programmes, Mr Greenwood argues.

Mr Greenwood notes that Britain's bilateral agreement with the US, negotiated by Mr Michael Heseltine, the former Defence Secretary last year, makes such a European programme less likely.

But he believes there is still widespread agreement within Europe on the need for European missile defences, and adds that a co-operative European effort would "be a powerful catalyst for intra-European arms collaboration on a grand scale." This is what Europe "really needs to safeguard its competence and competitiveness in military technologies and strengthen its defence industrial base," he says.

## Von Galen freed on bail in SMH trial

BY JOHN DAVIES IN FRANKFURT

A FRANKFURT court yesterday freed Count Ferdinand von Galen, the once prominent West German banker, on bail of DM 10m (\$3m) during his trial for fraud and breach of trust.

Count von Galen has been held for the past 14 months during investigations of problems which overwhelmed the private bank of Schroeder, Minne-meyer Hengst (SMH) in 1983.

During the investigations, a court refused to free him on bail of DM 18m for fear he might flee the country. But the Hesse state court in Frankfurt yesterday granted a defence lawyer's bail request.

A spokesman for the defence lawyer in Munich said last night that Count von Galen would be freed from jail today if bank guarantees for the bail sum could be finalised in time. The public prosecutor could appeal to a higher court but this would normally take weeks.

SMH, of which Count von Galen was a partner, heavily overvalued the construction equipment empire built up by Mr Horst-Dieter Esch. SMH was rescued by other banks and the healthy parts were sold to Lloyds Bank of the UK.

Mr Esch was sentenced in 1984 to three-and-a-half years jail. Mr Wolfgang Strzy, a former SMH partner was jailed last month for two years and three months, while another former partner and a senior employee were given suspended sentences.

## French growth for year slows to 1.3%

By David Housego in Paris

THE FRENCH economy expanded last year by a modest 1.3 per cent in real terms compared with 1.9 per cent in 1984, according to initial figures published yesterday by INSEE, the official statistics institute.

But fourth-quarter real GDP increased by 0.8 per cent (2.4 per cent at an annualised rate), thus maintaining the same momentum as in the July-September period.

The slowdown in growth for the year as a whole reflected the decline in real GDP in the first quarter and a falling off of exports.

## Aliens' dispute in Spanish enclaves ends

LEADERS of residents of Moroccan origin in Spain's north African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla reached agreement with the government yesterday to end a dispute over the application of a new aliens' law, Reuters reports from Madrid.

The agreement to grant residence permits to those who have roots in the enclaves came after a month of protest by Melilla's 30,000 people of Moroccan descent over a law which gives foreigners until March 1 to put their papers in order or face expulsion.

## Soviet plan wins cautious Greek Cypriot support

BY ANDRIANA IERODIACONU IN ATHENS

MR SPYROS KYPRIANOU, the Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu, yesterday jointly voiced cautious support for a Soviet proposal to bring about a peace settlement in Cyprus.

The two leaders, meeting in Athens, hailed as "constructive" and "a positive step" a January proposal by Moscow for an international conference under UN auspices to end the 11-year military occupation of northern Cyprus by Turkey, and establish a united, demilitarised and independent republic on the island.

At the same time, they reiterated their commitment to an initiative in progress by the UN Secretary-General, Mr Javier Perez de Cuellar, for a Cyprus peace settlement backed by Washington and London, and welcomed a recent EEC decision to press ahead with stalled negotiations for a full customs union between Cyprus and the EEC.

Moscow first put forward the idea of an international conference on Cyprus in 1974 after Turkey invaded the island in reaction to a coup there by the Greek junta. The January proposals represent the most extensively formulated presentation of Moscow's ideas on the final form that a settlement for Cyprus should take.

The Soviet proposal basically reflects the views of the Greek and Cypriot Governments in that it calls for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Cyprus. Mr Papandreu said in a statement endorsed by Mr Kyprianou after yesterday's talks.

The suggestion, which came as a surprise when it was unveiled in Nicosia last month, has been rejected by the Turkish side. Although official reaction has been low key, it is also understood to be regarded warily in Washington.

## Former IEA chief dies

BY DAVID MARSH IN PARIS

DR ULE LANTZKE, the West German executive director of the 21-nation International Energy Agency between 1974 and 1984, has died suddenly, aged 58.

Set up in 1974 as a crisis centre to handle the west's response to the threat of supply disruption after the first oil shock, the IEA evolved under Dr Lantzk's stewardship into an international forum for more general energy questions.

Mrs Helga Steeg, the present IEA executive director who took over from Dr Lantzk two years ago, said yesterday: "Without him the cooperation and cohesion achieved by Western industrialised countries during the energy crises of the last 10 years would not have been so successful."

Dr Lantzk set up the IEA's emergency oil-sharing mechanism under which countries can make supplies available to others suffering a shortfall. The mechanism has not had to be used because even the 1979-80 oil crisis was not severe enough to trigger it off.

## Bulgarians braced for anti-alcohol campaign

BY LESLIE COLLETT IN BERLIN

BULGARIANS, whose government is marking February as sobriety month, are bracing themselves for a possible anti-alcohol campaign inspired by Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet leader.

The main Communist newspaper, Rabotnichesko Delo, said the struggle against alcohol was of "national concern." It added that the party's "most loyal sons" had always been sober.

It criticised food shops for devoting too much shelf space to alcoholic beverages. Some 80 per cent of robberies and an even higher proportion of juvenile crime was committed under the influence of alcohol, it added.

Rabotnichesko Delo warned that in those companies where wages were related to performance, the pay of inebriated workers should be taken into account.

Reading between the lines of the article, Bulgarians saw a strong hint that measures might well be taken to curb alcohol sales, similar to those already undertaken in the Soviet Union.

Bulgarians, whose country was liberated from Turkish rule in 1878 by Tsar Alexander II, are normally the most pro-Soviet of East Europeans.

But they also cherish rakia (brandy) and wine as much as the Russians do their vodka, and might turn to illegal stills as Soviet citizens have done.

The Bulgarian Government derives considerable income from the sale of alcohol and noted that the recently-disbanded Ministry of Retail Trade was selling too much alcohol in order to boost profits. Smoking has also come under sharp criticism in Bulgaria which is Eastern Europe's largest tobacco producer.

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## OVERSEAS NEWS

## Britain and Nigeria restore full diplomatic relations

BY PATTI WALDMER IN LAGOS

THE RESUMPTION of full diplomatic ties between Britain and Nigeria, disclosed yesterday by President Ibrahim Babangida, ends a 17-month rift which began with a bizarre kidnapping attempt in London in July 1984.

The move comes at a critical time in the economic fortunes of Nigeria, Britain's largest trading partner in black Africa which bought some \$900m (\$1.2bn) worth of British exports in 1985.

Mr Umaru Dikko, a prominent Nigerian exile and a former minister in the government of ex-President Shehu Shagari, who was wanted by the military authorities on allegations of corruption, was discovered bound, gagged and heavily sedated in a cruise at London's Heathrow airport. He was about to be loaded on to a Nigeria Airways plane bound for Lagos.

In the furor that followed, Britain and Nigeria withdrew their respective High Commissioners, and relations between the two countries sank to their lowest level for many years.

Since the overthrow last August of Gen Muhammadu Buhari, who himself ousted President Shagari at the end of 1983, both sides have attempted to mend fences. Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, was the first Western leader to send a message of support to President Babangida.

Whitehall had hoped that a visit shortly after the August coup would

lead to an early exchange of High Commissioners, but Sir Geoffrey Howe, the UK Foreign Secretary, found himself the object of an outspoken public attack by a senior official in Nigeria's ruling military council.

The official, Air Commodore Larry Koiyian, again raised the Dikko affair, but in the intervening months passions appear to have cooled.

When Prof Bolaji Akinyemi, Nigeria's Foreign Minister, visited London in January, he made clear that Nigeria was prepared to leave the matter in the hands of the courts, where Mr Dikko is contesting an extradition order.

He also assured British officials that an appeal by two British aircraft engineers serving a 14-year sentence for assisting an aircraft to leave the country illegally at the time of the 1983 coup, would soon reach the appeal court in Nigeria.

Last month President Babangida announced a 30 per cent ceiling on Nigeria's external debt servicing and said that the country intended to reschedule its medium and long-term debts although no agreement had been reached on a economic recovery programme with the International Monetary Fund.

Economic difficulties caused by the slump in the price of oil, which accounts for over 95 per cent of export earnings, has led to a build up in arrears on Nigeria's trade payments.

## Sudan eases import curbs

SUDAN'S Central Bank has eased import restrictions introduced last week in an effort to dispel speculation about an impending freeze on foreign currency accounts.

According to a circular sent to banks yesterday, liabilities contracted before January 30 can be settled without identifying the source of the funds used.

One banker described the move as "very positive" after a week of confusion following the Government's announcement of new exchange control regulations.

Last week's measures seemed designed to halt the slide of the Sudanese pound on the free market, which had been the principal source of finance for the private sector. The free market pound currently trades at twice the official rate of 2.5 to the dollar.

The new regulations stipulate that all foreign currency is to be pooled with a central bank committee which will approve applications for import licences. Earlier Government proposals to ration petrol and basic commodities to reduce the budget deficit, officially put at \$1.5bn, have not so far been implemented.

Police made dawn raids over the weekend on shops throughout the capital, arresting traders and confiscating banned import items. Yesterday many shops refused to open and a delegation from the Chamber of Commerce was due to petition the commerce minister to complain over the heavy handed police action. According to a Chamber of Commerce official, traders would hold a one-day strike if all charges were not dropped.

The government's new measures were announced against a background of deteriorating relations with the IMF. Last week the IMF cut all further credit to Sudan following a board meeting in Washington.

Western officials in Khartoum maintain the Government is still a long way from agreement with the Fund on ways to resolve its \$9bn debt position.

## 1,300 held in India prices protest

BY JOHN ELLIOTT IN NEW DELHI

MORE THAN 1,300 people were arrested in New Delhi yesterday during demonstrations against price rises, which Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh, Finance Minister, warned would have to be followed by further tough action to offset increases in the country's budgetary deficit.

Mr Singh, who is expected to present his annual budget on February 22, hinted that he would have to cut the size of India's seventh Five-Year Plan if high expenditure was not offset by either increased public sector efficiency or higher public sector prices.

The arrests took place during a bandh—a day of strikes and demonstrations—called at trade unions and political parties in New Delhi to protest against substantial increases in oil and gas prices 10 days ago.

Bus windscreens were damaged and tyres deflated by demonstrators. Many shops in the city were shut and offices closed. A similar bandh is taking place today in Calcutta and the surrounding state of West Bengal.

India expects to produce about 3m tonnes of oil a year starting this June from a new find at Gandhar in the onshore Cambay area of the state of Gujarat.

The find is described by Colonel S. P. Wahi, chairman of the oil and natural gas commission, as a "major discovery" which could have reserves of 100m tonnes.

This is one of India's most significant finds since the Bombay high field was started over 10 years ago and comes at a time when recent rapid growth in domestic oil production is slowing. Domestic crude production in the

year to March 1986 is expected to be only three to 3.5 per cent above the 25m tonnes achieved last year. But demand for oil products is rising at 8.5 per cent compared to five per cent in recent years.

The oil struck at Gandhar is comparable to Bombay high crude. Geological reserves are estimated at 100m tonnes, including oil equivalent of gas.

Gandhar is part of a Rs 9,550m (\$562m) Cambay basin three-year exploration project, for which the World Bank has extended a \$242.5m (\$173m) loan.

additional revenue of Rupees 8m (\$48m) in a full year. Other price rises of government-controlled items such as fertilisers were also raised by cutting subsidies to yield more funds, unofficially estimated to total as much as Rs10bn a year.

At a meeting with his ministry's consultative committee of MPs, Mr Singh yesterday warned that revised estimates for 1985-86 showed that financial grants to regional state governments were running at 65 per cent above planned levels and that the cost of food and fertiliser subsidies and other support for loss-making public sector industries was 35 per cent higher than planned.

With the prospect of the country's debt service ratio expected to rise from about 14 per cent to 20 per cent within the next four or five years, he warned that the total plan would have to be cut if the public was not prepared to accept cuts, and public sector inefficiency continued.

at a time when imports had been rising at a rate of 30 per cent, which worried the government, even though international oil prices were falling. The increases were also intended to help Mr Singh balance his budget by raising

## South Yemen party chief emerges as key figure

BY TONY WALKER IN CAIRO

MR ALI SALEM AL BYDH, secretary of South Yemen's ruling Socialist Party (YSP), although nominally junior to the new president, Haider Abul Bakr al-Attas, has emerged as a key figure and possible new strong man in the country.

Mr Ali al-Bydh, 46, is a veteran of South Yemen's revolution against Britain and has occupied key Government posts including Foreign Minister from 1969-71. Most recently he was local Government Minister.

Mr al-Bydh was close to former president Mr Abdul Fatah Ismail, whose death was officially announced yesterday by Aden radio. It said Mr Ismail died of burns inside an army tank hit by supporters of ousted president Mr Ali Massar Mohammad as it was taking him to hospital on January 13, the day fighting broke out between rival Marxist factions in South Yemen.

Mr Ismail was head of the hardline pro-Soviet faction.

Mr Salem Saleh Mohammad, is the Assistant Secretary General of the YSP and like Mr al-Bydh and Mr al-Attas, is one of the few surviving Politburo members still in power.

## Iran launches ground offensive against Iraq

BY KATHY EVANS IN KUWAIT

IRAN launched a two-pronged ground offensive in the southern sector of the Iraqi warfront yesterday, the first in 11 months. Iraqi officials in Baghdad have conceded that some territory has been taken by the Iranians, but said a counter-attack was under way by its Third Army Corps.

The Iranian offensive appears to focus on the southern city of Basra, although Tehran has also claimed to have captured an island in the Shatt al Arab waterway called Umm al Rassas, southwest of the city of Khorramshahr. Some observers in the region speculated that the Iranians may be trying to cut Basra off from the south for the first time during the conflict.

An attack on the southern shores of the Gulf would considerably worry Kuwait, whose capital city is just 100 miles from Basra.

The Iranian official news agency, Irna, said that many Iraqis had been killed and wounded in the attack, although Iraqi officials said that Iranian corpses were littering the Shatt al Arab waterway. Iran has been preparing for the offensive for more than six

months in a nationwide campaign for fresh volunteers to go to the front. Diplomats in Baghdad believe that about 200,000 Iranian troops were poised for the offensive.

Most observers were discounting the possibility of this attack being the long-awaited "final" offensive. Firstly, the attack was launched on the eve of the 10-day celebrations in Iran marking the return of Imam Khomeini to Tehran seven years ago. About 500 foreign guests are assembled in the capital, and today millions of Iranians are expected to participate in demonstrations in a show of support for the regime.

Nevertheless, observers noted that the size of the operation appeared to be larger than usual but they did not expect it to be any more prolonged than last year's spring offensive in March. The operation, codenamed Val Fajr 8, is thought to be part of a series of offensives. Its duration will depend largely on the success it achieves in the first few days.

Both sides appeared reserved in the tone of their communications. However, the Iranians clearly do not want to build up expectations among the people.

## S. Africans die as rival groups clash

By Anthony Robinson in Johannesburg

THE charred bodies of five black men executed by flaming "necklaces" of rubber tyres were found by police in the Eastern Cape shanty town of Soweto near Port Elizabeth yesterday.

The discovery was made after a week-end of political faction fighting between members of the rival United Democratic Front (UDF) and the black consciousness Azapo movement.

The corpses were found after a bloody confrontation between members of the two organisations in the township of Walmer on Saturday when two blacks were backed to death.

In a similar incident in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra, Mr Jerry Kumudu, a local Azapo leader, was stabbed to death yesterday by two unknown assailants who called him out of his home.

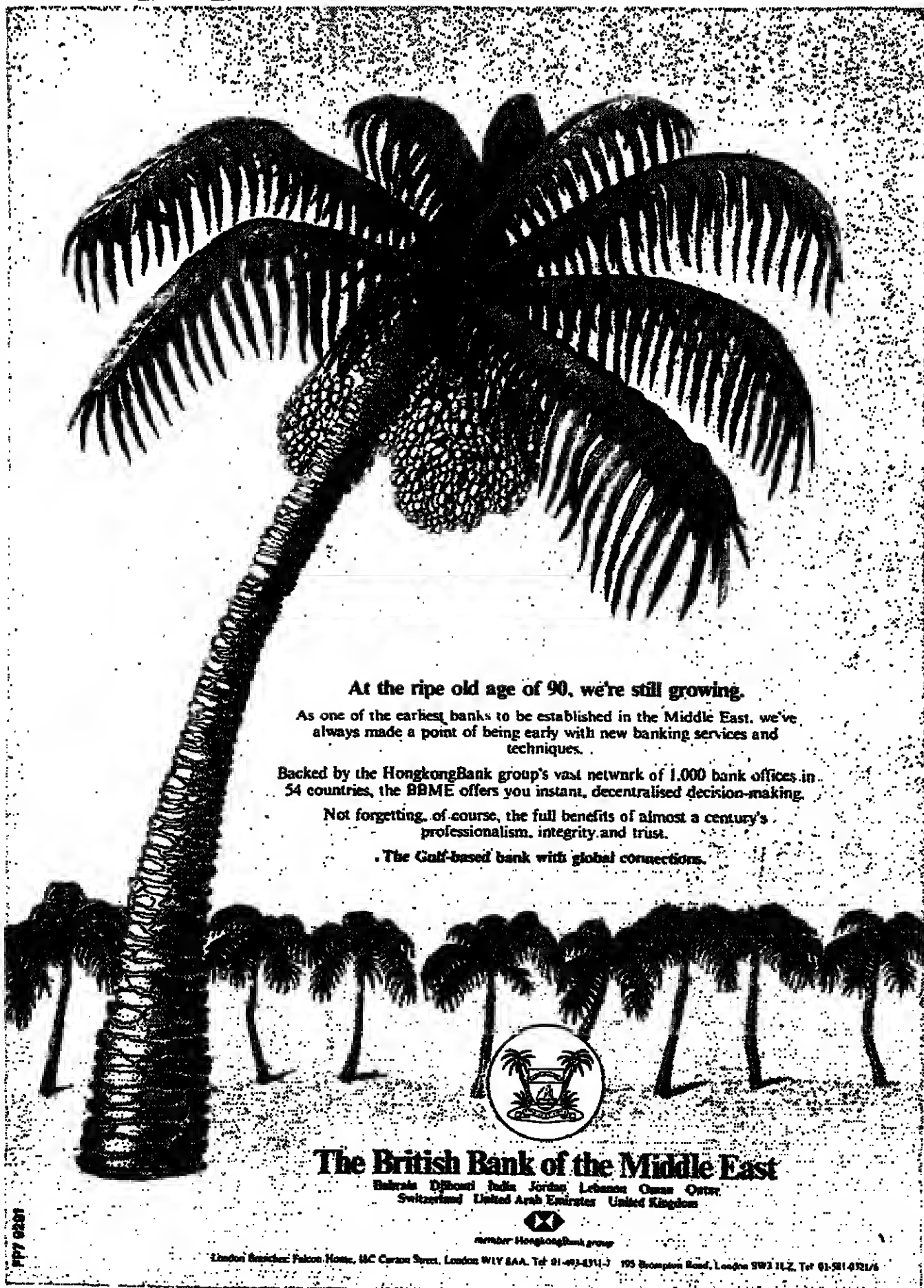
Meanwhile, in the Durban area a limpet mine was found in a public park at Amanzimtoti south of the city which was the scene of a pre-Christmas bomb attack on a crowded supermarket in which six people lost their lives. The bomb was defused by a bomb disposal squad.

Elsewhere police mounted a major manhunt in the squatter shack community of Umbungu, also south of Durban, where three black policemen were backed to death on Sunday by a 500-strong crowd armed with home-made guns, spears and panga knives.

The three policemen were part of a seven-man patrol which set out to investigate reports of renewed tribal faction fighting over land and squatter rights in the densely packed squatter townships in which over 110 people have died over the past two months.

## Ugandan minister

An article in the Financial Times of February 7 headlined "Museveni's long haul to subdue the north" reported that Mr Paul Ssemugere, Uganda's new Internal Affairs Minister, had held the same post in the ousted regime of Dr Milton Obote. This was an error. Mr Ssemugere held the position in the regime headed by Major Gen Tito Okello. We apologise for any embarrassment caused.



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## AMERICAN NEWS

# US companies remain opposed to oil import tax

BY WILLIAM HALL IN NEW YORK

THE US oil industry remains strongly opposed to congressional efforts to introduce a tax on US oil imports but there are signs that a number of oil companies may be changing their mind given the financial problems some of them are facing as a result of the recent sharp drop in world oil prices.

The American Petroleum Institute (API) said yesterday it remains officially opposed to the introduction of a tax or "fee" on the 4.8m barrels a day (b/d) of crude oil which the US imports. A number of bills have been tabled in the Senate recommending the introduction of a tax of between \$5 and \$10 on each barrel of imported US oil.

The majority of the support for the proposed oil import tax is coming from politicians in the states of the south and south west of the US which have been badly hit by the recession in the US energy industry. The argument is that if a \$5 per barrel tax is imposed this will allow local oil prices to rise and help local oil producers and related industries.

Several state governments which have lost millions in tax revenues and local bankers which are facing heavy loan losses on energy loans are said to be supporting the moves to impose an import tax. API says that an oil import fee would be a "bureaucratic

nightmare." It believes higher domestic US oil prices would be subject to extra taxes and this would offset the financial help to the troubled oil companies. It also believes areas of the US such as New England, which use a lot of heating oil, would lobby hard to be made an exception.

There are signs in Washington that the US Administration's earlier firm opposition to an oil import tax is softening and oil industry officials are concerned that the industry's united front against a possible oil tax is being weakened by some oil companies who see some short-term financial benefits from the introduction of a tax.

Joe Mann in Caracas adds: The Venezuelan Government is lobbying Congress in Washington to counter the oil import tax proposal.

Non-oil exports to the US have already been affected by protectionist measures and the government is seriously concerned about the potential threat to its economy from an oil import tax at a time of falling world prices.

Exports of crude and refined petroleum products from the ministry of the Venezuelan economy and most of its oil is exported to the US. If a tax is imposed, Venezuela will seek exclusion or at least attempt to convince the US not to give special treatment to Mexico and Canada.

## Venezuela oil prices freed from government control

BY DOMINIC LAWSON IN LONDON AND JOE MANN IN CARACAS

THE VENEZUELAN state oil company, Petroleos de Venezuela, is to be allowed to set its oil prices without prior approval from the Venezuelan Government.

In a communiqué yesterday, the Government said that the Petroleos would now have the commercial flexibility to adopt itself to the new dynamics of the (oil) market.

The move is a sharp break with the traditional policy of one of the founding members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which has been to control government's control over the price of oil.

At last week's meeting of five leading OPEC ministers in Vienna, the oil ministers of Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates warned that in the

current state of over-supply, each OPEC country would have to sell what it can at whatever price it can get in order to compete for market share.

Venezuela's main market for its export target of 1.5m barrels a day is the US. But the new Saudi Arabian policy of abandoning official prices and tying its crude prices to the spot market value of refined products, has led to a tenfold increase in Saudi crude exports to the US, and hit Venezuela's share.

Last week, Venezuela's exports, which were thought to have dropped to only 300,000 b/d, but much more than half the targeted level. The new policy will give the state oil company the flexibility it needs to counter the threat from Saudi Arabia.

## Shuttle inquiry homes in on safety seals

THE US presidential commission investigating the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger began to focus its attention yesterday on allegations of weaknesses in the safety seals on the booster rockets, reports Terry Bowditch from New York.

The commission demanded full details of warnings said to have been given by engineers at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) over problems encountered with the seals. Officials from NASA will be interrogated on this issue by commission members today, following a complete review of NASA records on the issue yesterday.

Questions over the effectiveness of the seals used in the solid fuel booster rockets intensified over the weekend following a report in the New York Times suggesting that NASA has been aware of problems in this area for at least a year.

are used to prevent flames burning through the seams at the juncture of segments of the booster rocket, which are assembled from four separately manufactured units. According to the newspaper report, NASA was warned by its own engineers that the seals were eroding in flight, and told that if this led to the destruction of the seals that join the rockets together, the results "would certainly be catastrophic."

## Washington praises Haiti for human rights moves

THE US yesterday commended Haiti's new military-dominated governing council for initial moves to restore human rights and a plan to disband the infamous militia unit known as the Tontons Macoutes. Renter reports from Washington.

The council's government's actions so far represent a good start and we hope that it will soon take further actions to restore human rights and move towards democratic government. Mr Larry Speakes, White House spokesman, said. Mr Speakes said the council had moved to disarm and subordinate the dreaded Tontons Macoutes, an unofficial militia, to the armed forces. "We understand the force will eventually be disbanded," he said.

Mr Speakes said Washington was encouraged that the new

government had released political prisoners and allowed independent radio stations to reopen.

The US helped President Jean-Claude Duvalier and members of his family flee Haiti last week under cover of darkness, ending 23 years of rule by the Duvalier family.

The exiled Haitian President is now, in temporary residence in the Alpine resort town of Tignes. He is posing increasing embarrassment to a French government struggling to find foreign host for its unwanted guest.

Though officially only making a transit stop in France, the ousted president has so far shown no sign of checking out of his four-star, lakeside refuge in a converted medieval monastery.

## The Mulroney Government has been reluctant to confront key issues, Bernard Simon reports

# Money markets rebuke Ottawa's policymakers

INTERNATIONAL money markets have driven home a more forceful verdict in the past six weeks on the Canadian Government's economic and political policies than the local business community has been able to put across in almost a year.

By driving the Canadian dollar down to one record low after another the financial markets have signalled their concern at the reluctance of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's Government to confront some of the key issues facing the country since the Progressive Conservative Party swept into office in a landslide election win 18 months ago.

The dollar sank to a nadir of 69.20 US cents last Tuesday, a drop of more than 2 cents since the beginning of the year and 5 cents below its level last July.

Ottawa won some breathing space last week by intervening forcefully in the foreign exchange market and engineering a sharp rise in domestic interest rates. The Government has borrowed more than C\$3bn since the beginning of the year to support the Canadian currency.

Commercial banks have raised their prime lending rate in four stages from 10 per cent to 12.25 per cent.

The spread between US and Canadian short-term interest rates, a crucial determinant of capital flows between the two

countries, has widened from 1.3 percentage points, when pressure began to mount on the dollar last November, to almost four points at the end of last week.

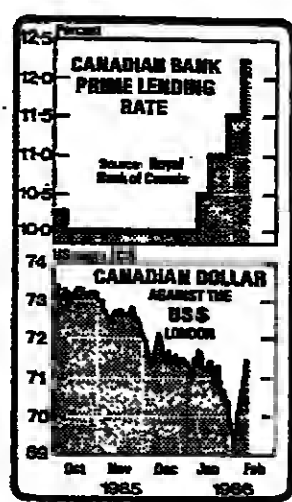
These measures have helped push the dollar back up to 71 US cents, and have left foreign currency analysts in no doubt that it will remain above 70 cents for the time being. Lines of credit with a large group of Canadian and international banks give the authorities access to at least US\$7.5bn to defend the Canadian dollar.

Mr Michael Wilson, Finance Minister, said in parliament last Thursday that the government was "prepared to use its official reserves to enter the market as aggressively as necessary to counter speculative pressure on the dollar."

However the authorities are not expected to try and push the currency much higher, preferring to avoid further hikes in interest rates.

Whether downward pressure on the dollar once again increases in the weeks and months ahead will be largely determined by what Mr Wilson has to say in the budget which he plans to deliver before the end of the month.

The Canadian dollar's recent weakness is partly due to short-term or cyclical factors, over which the Government has little short-term control. The



Michael Wilson: all eyes on his upcoming budget

tumbling oil price and weak markets for some of Canada's other resource exports have certainly contributed to the dollar's decline.

Canada is also sucking in imports as the economic upswing enters its fourth year. The 5.5 per cent real growth rate in Gross National Product in the fourth quarter of 1985 was the highest of any industrial country.

Mr James Stewart, economist at Dominion Securities Field in Toronto, estimates that the current account deficit on the balance of payments will widen

rule the Bank of Canada's traditional concern at the inflationary impact of a lower exchange rate. Mr Wilson pointed instead to the benefits to exporters.

From a broader perspective, the passage of the Gramm-Rudman Bill through the US Congress last December was a sharp reminder of the lack of progress towards deficit reduction north of the 49th parallel.

Canada's Budget deficit is proportionally almost double that of the US. The federal Government's outstanding debt grew by over 20 per cent in 1985 and it spends one dollar in every five on debt servicing.

Mr Wilson's promise in last May's budget to contain the 1985-86 deficit at around C\$34bn will probably be fulfilled in the fiscal year ending on March 31. But this achievement will be due largely to the higher than expected growth rate of the economy and to tax increases. The deficit would have been significantly trimmed had the Government not decided last year to bail out uninsured depositors in two failed

Alberta banks. The business and financial community is disappointed that the Mulroney Government has not taken advantage of its overwhelming election mandate to keep a tighter rein on spending. According to Mr Lloyd Atkinson, chief econo-

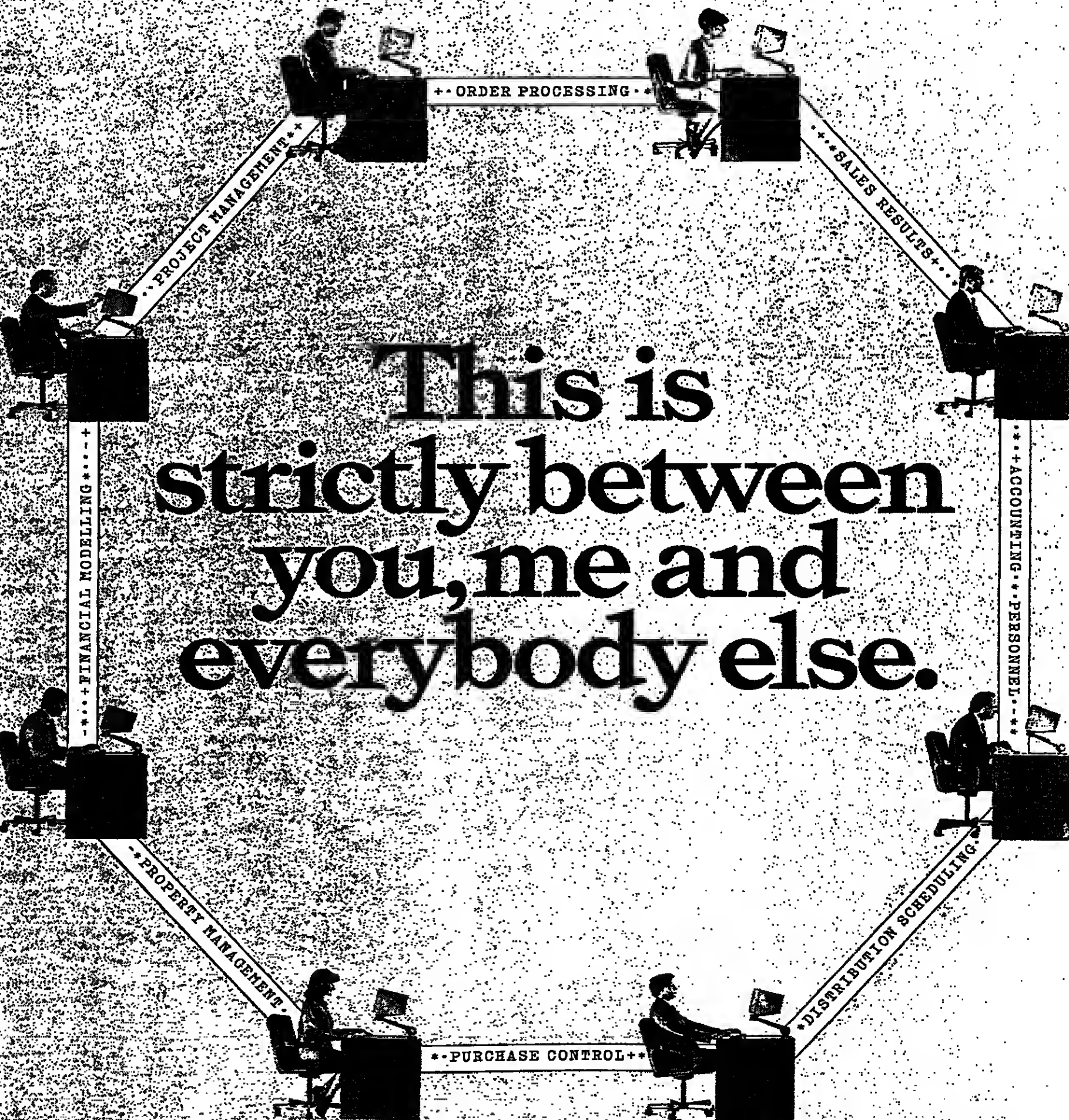
mist at Bank of Montreal: "There is a perception in the market that the Government just lacks the will to come to grips with the budget deficit. There is also a perception that Canada will manage its deficit by raising taxes."

Mr Wilson has promised that his forthcoming budget will make a dent in the deficit. He is expected to announce a cut of about 10 per cent, relying mainly on higher revenues generated by an expanding economy, and the elimination of a number of tax concessions to individuals and companies. Hopes of significant spending cuts have been lifted by reports last week that the government has ordered a civil service hiring freeze.

Events of the last few weeks have complicated the Minister's task. The Bank of Montreal estimates that the jump in interest rates will cost the exchequer an annualised C\$3bn by pushing down the growth rate and thereby lowering tax revenues and raising unemployment benefit payments.

That figure excludes revenue losses from Canada's oil and gas producers, which paid C\$1.4bn in federal taxes from revenues of C\$33.5bn in the first half of last year. The energy industry is bringing itself for lower profits as it is forced to compete more aggressively for markets, especially in the US.

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## A list of our 1986 objectives.

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## Prague signs oil deal with Moscow

Mr Jay Kingham, senior vice president international of the PMA, said: "There may be grounds for retaliation on all of the UK Government's actions. The limited list may be discriminatory, and may also be a denial of trade mark protection to products which have been blacklisted."

The UK Department of Health said: "We have had representations from the PMA, and they have also approached the Department of Trade and Industry. There has been no inter-governmental contact."

Already they run at a considerably higher figure than Spanish sales in the Ten—114m tonnes in the first 10 months of last year, and so Spain may in its turn seek restraints.

## Indonesia cuts Customs red tape

At its inception many Customs staff were sent on paid leave and ports were put under new management. Within weeks of its implementation clearance delays had been cut and corruption scaled back. The purpose of the scheme

Corruption in Indonesian ports was legendary and importers agree that problems have eased, even if there are signs that Customs officers are becoming more demanding

Plainly the SGS arrangement has antagonised those who have lost most by the scheme or feel embarrassed by the need to "contract out" the important Customs function.

But corruption in Indonesia's ports was legendary, and im-

While this means correct duties are charged more often to Indonesian importers, which helps the Jakarta government's revenues, it limits the benefits coming back to the importers' Singapore partners. Finally, the chemicals-to-

Mr. Dietz calculates that taking into account the recent fall in the dollar and an approximate price of Roubles 177 per ton of crude the Soviet Union is selling its oil around \$29 (£20.7 a barrel, well above spot market prices. This, he says, may not be as disadvantageous to the Soviet Union's East European customers as it initially appears because the cost of generating hard currency considerably push up the cost of buying in the West.

British book exports to India totalled about £16m in 1984 and the publishers have been looking at ways of transferring more printing rights to Indian publishers.

India strengthened its copyright laws in 1984 but the slow

The exports by Indian printers and publishers cited by the delegation involve books licensed only for sale in India being exported to the Middle East, East Africa and other parts of Asia, infringing the copyright agreements.

Matsushita's exports of facsimile machines to Europe have been growing rapidly in recent years, rising from 4,200 units in 1983 to 21,000 units last year.

revert to Chinese ownership 20 years after completion. Nonetheless, the joint venture believes it can make a profit before then.

The complex will include two

The 1,400Mw power plant will cost \$1.4bn (£1bn). A company to be owned 30 per cent by the government of the state of Queensland and 30 per cent by the Turkish Electrical Authority (TEK) will be set up to build and operate the plant with an

The Australian Government is believed to see the project as a major bridgehead for trade, especially coal sales, in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East.

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## ABBNEY NATIONAL FIVE STAR ACCOUNT







## UK NEWS

# NMW ends talks with Citicorp for broker services venture

By Alan Cane

NEGOTIATIONS between Citicorp of New York and NMW Computers, the UK's largest stock processing bureau, to form a company to provide dealing and banking services for stockbrokers in the deregulated UK securities market, have broken down.

The talks were first announced in April last year.

Later this week NMW is expected to announce that it has signed agreements with Barclays Bank to establish a company similar to the projected Citicorp venture. Industry sources suggest that only Barclays has the financial resources, staff and technological expertise to take part in such a venture.

Neither Citicorp nor NMW would comment last night on the reasons for the breakdown in negotiations. It is understood that NMW broke off the talks when it became clear there was a danger that the computer-based systems, to be set

up jointly by the two companies, would not be ready in time for October 27 this year, the planned date for the "Big Bang" in the London securities market.

The new company will be a "clearing member" of the London Stock Exchange, offering complete "back-office" settlement services to member companies. The only other clearing member announced so far is House of Fraser, which is offering services based on computer technology developed by its US parent, Security Pacific.

NMW already processes over 50 per cent of stock exchange business through its computer bureau service. Its business grew rapidly after Centra, the National Westminster Bank computer bureau subsidiary, announced it was leaving the stock settlement business because of the cost of investment in computer hardware and software.

Two large ICL mainframe computers, at a cost of £3m, have already been ordered by NMW to run its new settlement system.

Barclays Bank will be a full member of the deregulated exchange through its investment in stockbroker de Zoete & Bevan and stockbroker Wedd Darlacher Mordaunt. Barclays de Zoete Wedd is one of the 28 firms approved by the Bank of England to deal in gilt-edged markets.

NMW's decision to find another partner instead of Citicorp at this stage reflects the growing nervousness in the City of London over the preparations for the "Big Bang".

Most firms have stretched their financial and management resources to the limit to have their computer systems ready in time. There are widespread fears that some will still not be ready by October.

# Japanese buy scotch whisky distiller

By Lisa Wood

TOMATIN DISTILLERS, the scotch whisky distiller which went into voluntary liquidation a year ago, is to be purchased by two Japanese companies. One purchaser, Takara Shuzo, is the largest trader of Scotch, a rice-based spirit.

The sale, for an undisclosed amount, is to a company which has been registered in Scotland by Takara Shuzo and Okura, a major Japanese trading house. For 16 years Okura has handled Japanese sales of Tomatin's bulk malt whisky exports and its brand, Big T.

Mr Minoru Kukita, president of Takara, which will have an 80 per cent stake in Tomatin said there was a declining trend for sales of scotch generally. But he added: "In view of the growing tendency towards quality products, a considerable latent demand can be expected for scotch whisky."

At present Takara Shuzo has no whisky brand in Japan. The strategy for Tomatin which is based in north east Scotland and holds 5 per cent of Scotland's malt distilling capacity, is to build up sales of the company's Big T brand. Current sales are tiny, both overseas and in the UK, compared with the major scotch whisky brands.

Mr Masaru Suzuki, general manager of Okura in London, said the intention of the purchase was not to secure supplies of bulk malt whisky. Large quantities have traditionally been shipped to Japan as a component of their scotch. But Japanese scotch exports slumped by over 30 per cent last year because of problems of major Japanese whisky distillers such as Suntory.

Recently Guinness said that should its proposed merger with the Distillers Company go ahead, it would terminate DCL's exports of bulk malt whisky to Japan. Such exports have caused considerable controversy in the industry. Some argue that such shipments harm Scotch sales, while others claim that they get rid of surplus stocks.

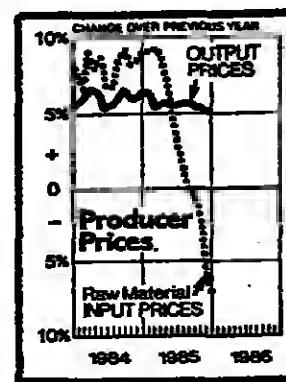
# DOWNWARD TREND IN WHOLESALE PRICE INFLATION HALTED Manufacturers' prices up sharply

By George Graham

MANUFACTURERS made sharp increases last month in the prices they charge at the factory gate, reversing the downward trend of wholesale price inflation in recent months. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said the rise was mainly because of a traditional concentration of price increases at the start of the year, but the increase would cause concern if it was continued in the next few months.

Output prices in January rose 0.8 per cent from the previous month, compared with a rise of 0.2 per cent in December. The year-on-year rate of increase rose to 5.2 per cent in January from 5.1 per cent the previous month, according to figures published yesterday by the DTI.

Industry's costs, however, are still subdued. Prices for raw materials and fuel purchased by manufacturing industry fell by 7.1 per cent in the twelve months to January, the largest year-on-year drop recorded since the 1950s. This was despite a 0.3 per cent rise over the



latest month. Industry's input prices in the same month of 1985 rose by 1.5 per cent.

January's figures do not yet show the effect of the latest fall in oil prices. Fuel prices in the month remained unchanged. However, the recent fall in the value of sterling will lead to higher prices for non-oil imports.

A new series of seasonally adjusted figures for manufacturers' input prices - announced for the first time yesterday - presents a more favourable picture of industry's costs. Allowing for electricity costs and food prices which vary seasonally, the DTI said producers' input prices had fallen in each month since March 1985.

The seasonally adjusted input price index for January stood 0.4 per cent below December's level, and the year-on-year fall was 7.6 per cent, sharper than the unadjusted fall. The DTI said it did not intend to publish a seasonally adjusted version of the manufacturers' output price index, since it had a less marked seasonal pattern and is affected by budget changes in drink and tobacco duties.

The drop in input prices reflects lower commodity prices and the appreciation of sterling from its lows in January last year. Year-on-year comparisons are expected to become less favourable in the next few months as lower base figures from the second and third quarters of 1985 begin to take effect.

# Purchase of BA subsidiary claimed

By David Brindle

COLN VALLEY Investments, a company known largely for industrial property investment and development, said yesterday it had negotiated the purchase of British Airways Helicopters, the wholly owned BA subsidiary.

BA, however, said no agreement had been reached with Colin Valley or with any of the parties with which, it did admit, it had been discussing disposal of the subsidiary. The statement from Colin Valley caused some surprise. Although a possible sale of BA Helicopters had been rumoured, speculation had centred on more prominent names as likely purchasers.

Colin Valley, a private company established about five years ago by Mr Martyn Meade, last attracted notice last year when it sold its subsidiary Omes Faulkner Holdings, engaged in production of high-quality forgings, to Williams Holdings.

# Labour outlines plan for flexible state intervention of industry

By Margaret Van Hattem, Parliamentary Correspondent

A POWERFUL new forum of state intervention in industry will be essential if British industry is to survive, Mr John Smith, Labour's trade and industry spokesman, said yesterday.

Outlining Labour's industrial strategy in a speech at Sussex University, Mr Smith said Labour proposals for a new, flexible approach to government intervention were attracting widespread support.

"The time has come, I believe, for the founding of a new organisation, perhaps named British Enterprise, organised and funded by government, to be able to establish new industrial ventures on its own, to enter into joint ventures with the private sector and perhaps, most importantly, to act as a catalyst for innovation," he said.

"There is so much that needs to be done that I believe that a powerful new organisation along these lines will prove to be essential. It is a form of public ownership and intervention which offers the possibility of flexible and direct action, with or without private sector co-operation, which could command wide support within industry as well as be an effective agent in the plan-

ning of our national industrial recovery."

The central failure of the Thatcher governments, Mr Smith said, had been their failure to confront the long-term strategic problems facing the British economy. The present fashion for takeovers offered no solution to these problems, nor was it a substitute for industrial policy.

"We must establish criteria which consider the consequences in terms of the future for employees and the advantages for the development of the industry itself," he said.

"With the current free-for-all, the battle between the sector barons makes money for the advertising agencies and the city finance houses who rival each other with increased profits won through the game of 'who dares merges'."

Labour saw the way forward as involving active demand management to raise the overall level of activity and investment, combined with an active supply side strategy involving a co-ordinated use of industrial and trade policy "to address the regeneration of manufacturing industry which is now rightly regarded as central to the long-

term recovery of the UK economy."

Stimulating private sector investment in manufacturing would require a trade and exchange rate policy that could help guarantee "sustained and buoyant demand" during the transition period, before a regeneration programme could restore the competitiveness of the UK economy.

In the last resort the UK would have to be prepared to go it alone and adopt whatever individual trade policy were required to sustain expansion, he said. But it would be "infinitely preferable" that UK recovery should be part of a co-ordinated programme involving the other European economies.

Secondly, the extra freedom offered by the existence of substantial stocks of assets overseas as a result of North Sea oil revenues being invested abroad could not be ignored, he said. "The phased repatriation of overseas assets, with institutional tax privileges being made conditional on meeting specified asset portfolio or net investment flow guidelines, could provide a significant proportion of the resources we need," he said.

# Accounting guidelines

THE LONDON Stock Exchange has asked us to point out that any future guidelines on inflation accounting will be formulated by the Accounting Standards Council (ASC) and not on its own initiative as suggested in the Financial Times yesterday.

The ASC is now working on a discussion paper in inflation accounting after the dropping of its proposals late last year that statutory support should be sought for its standard on inflation accounting. This was rejected by its parent body, the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies.

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## UK NEWS

## Low oil price slows UK coal conversion

BY MAURICE SAMUELSON

MANY UK companies that had planned to convert to coal fuel are now having second thoughts because of tumbling oil prices.

Evidence of this has emerged in the dwindling rate of applications to the Department of Energy for grants to assist in converting boilers and other plant from oil to solid fuel.

In the last quarter of 1985 the Department received only 13 applica-

tions, well under half the average for the first three quarters of the year. In the same period, for every three offers of grants which were accepted, another two were not taken up.

Department officials have no doubt that the decline in the number of applications stems from the fall in crude oil prices.

While crude prices have fallen from about \$30 a barrel to about \$18

in the past year, fuel oil prices in Britain have more than halved, but average coal prices have remained unchanged.

The trend is causing concern in the National Coal Board, which sees the industrial and commercial market as its only growth area.

Mr Ian MacGregor, NCB chairman, said last week that the oil price slide was "a stark reminder that we have to produce coal at

costs customers are prepared to pay."

Some 400 grants, worth about £50m, have been paid to a wide range of companies since the scheme was launched four years ago. The grant covers up to 25 per cent of the cost of equipment needed by the applicant to substitute coal for oil or gas.

Despite the falling oil prices, the Government is still encouraging the

switch to coal. Last week, Mr David Hunt, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department of Energy, again hailed coal as "the fuel of the future".

Coal Board chiefs, too, believe that their industrial marketing campaign will continue to make headway, at least as long as crude oil prices do not drop below \$15 a barrel.



## British market for small domestic appliances 'shrinking'

BY CHRISTOPHER PARKES

THE UK market for small domestic appliances is shrinking. By 1990 annual sales will be worth only £250m in real terms, 10 per cent less than in 1984, according to a report from the

Euromonitor research company. The trade reached a cyclical peak in 1984 after a three-year spell of rapid growth, the study says. Now, however, "the industry would seem to have come not to a crossroads but to a dead end." Only replacement demand for worn-out appliances and the occasional successful new introduction offer manufacturers any prospect of growth.

Euromonitor suggests that in future there will be fewer possibilities for innovation or upgrading existing products and that will dampen sales.

It points out that, in any case, improvements to traditional appliances have tended to be more consistently successful than introduction of wholly new products.

Combined sales of the three most successful innovations of recent years - food processors, deep-fat fryers and sandwich-makers - were £70m in 1984. The market for electric kettles, shaken up by the arrival of plastic jugs, was worth £75m.

"Most new kitchen gadgets enjoy a brief spasm of demand before the consumer perceives the lack of true usefulness beneath the mask of novelty," the company says. "Apart from these occasional, and often brief, successes, the market continues to be dominated by the three traditional leading products: vacuum cleaners, kettles and irons."

Among the 15 most common existing small electric appliances, the study forecasts that sales of only one - the coffee maker - will have increased by the end of the decade.

Present leaders in the market are Electrolux and Hoover, each with a 10.5 per cent share. However, they owe their position solely to sales of vacuum cleaners and do not manufacture any other small appliances.

That leaves Philips and Allegion International of the US, best known for its Sunbeam, Rowenta and Bionda brands, in the lead in the rest of the market. They have 9.5 per cent each, followed by Braun with 8.5 per cent, Moulinex (6 per cent), Russell Hobbs, the IT subsidiary (5.5 per cent) and Pico (4.5 per cent).

Black & Decker, the US company best known for its power tools, launched a range of small domestic appliances late last year, and does not yet appear in the list of leading manufacturers.

Even so, imported products are taking an increasing share of the UK market. Euromonitor estimates that between 1980 and 1984 the value of UK-made products on sale fell from £75m to £51m at manufacturers' selling prices. Imports "bedged" with British makers' names or trade marks rose from £32m to £75m and imported brands increased from £50m to £59m.

The small electrical appliance report, Euromonitor Publications, 57-59 Turnmill Street, London EC1M 5GU, £220.

## Renewal season gets off to cautious start

BY JOHN MOORE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

REINSURANCE experts in London have been predicting over the past two months that there is likely to be a radical change in their business cycle and the portfolio of business that they underwrite.

The market in London represents an important centre for reinsurance capacity. The Lloyd's insurance community accounts for nearly 10 per cent of world reinsurance capacity and leading London reinsurers carry the City's overall market share to more than 20 per cent of a \$400m (£27m) industry.

The trends in the reinsurance community are followed closely by insurance specialists, for whatever happens in the reinsurance community can have a direct bearing on the trends in the general insurance cycle.

The reinsurance community provides a market in which insurance companies can lay off the risks which are too large to carry on their own account. If the available reinsurance market shrinks then insurance companies are forced to carry more business on their own books. That could lead to a rise in premium rates and increased costs to the consumer.

In the past two years there has been a dramatic change in world reinsurance markets. Since the late 1970s reinsurers have experienced poor results. More participants have entered the reinsurance community, attracted by the low costs of operations, the high returns which can be earned by pure investment activity rather than underwriting and the level of demand.

The explosion in available reinsurance capacity has led to a sharp reduction in reinsurance rates and in the last two years or so an even sharper curbing of underwriting activity.

It is against this background that insurance and reinsurance specialists have entered the present renewal season - when insurance and reinsurance contracts are renewed for the calendar year.

In the last couple of years the renewal period has extended itself significantly. Brokers buying reinsurance protection for their clients have found it increasingly difficult to find available markets for the clients. It has taken a comparatively long time to complete the placing of

risks and find available markets. Usually when insurers lay off their risks they offer a proportion of their business portfolios to reinsurance companies which share an agreed part of their business. However, reinsurance companies have become wary about the type of business they have been offered.

They prefer to accept risks on an individual basis rather than shares in portfolios where they have less control of the business accepted by the primary insurers.

To curb the business volumes they have been accepting, the reinsurers have cut the commissions they pay to the insurance companies passing over the business. They have reduced the level of profit commissions paid to the insurance companies on the lines of business and in some cases eliminated them altogether.

However, these moves have met with limited success in forcing the primary insurers to increase their rates.

Underwriters have noted that the most significant change in the reinsurance market has taken place on US casualty business and world-wide liability business. Professional indemnity business, medical and hospital malpractice, products liability and many third party liability insurances were becoming almost impossible to insure in the US because of the size of claims.

Elsewhere, in the reinsurance market there have been shortages of capacity for motor and third party excess of loss reinsurance contracts covering unlimited claims. Layers of reinsurance agreed with fixed limits, however, could still be placed with reinsurers.

In spite of the improving trends, many reinsurers are worried that the effects of the previous downturn on the insurance and reinsurance cycle will remain with the industry for some time. They argue that large "catastrophe" claims from previous hurricane damage to property in the US, past severe winter weather damage, large liability claims on asbestos and other liability business have still to work their way through the insurance and reinsurance systems.

"We are beginning to turn the market round," said one underwriter, "but there is an awful long way to go because we have slipped back too far."

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## UK NEWS

# Highland Express airline set for maiden flight

BY MARK MEREDITH, SCOTTISH CORRESPONDENT

HIGHLAND EXPRESS, a one-jumbo, 59-seat transatlantic airline based at Prestwick Airport, in Scotland, prepared for takeoff yesterday.

Mr Randolph Fields, a 33-year-old US millionaire lawyer launched his airline at a reception in Glasgow. Highland Express received its licence from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) last Thursday and plans to begin regular flights to Canada and the US from Prestwick, Stansted (north of London) and Birmingham airports on June 1.

The airline will be the first known to make use of government aid in the form of regional assistance grants and to have raised funds through the tax-efficient Business Expansion Scheme.

The Industry Department for Scotland has provided £1m in start-up support in the form of selective assistance based on an initial 200 jobs to be created at Prestwick airport, and a further £1m will be gen-

erated with further jobs. An additional £750,000 comes from other government agencies.

The new airline will help to revive the fortunes of Prestwick, which is one of Britain's least-used airports with only two scheduled passenger carriers, Air Canada and Northwest Orient.

A prospectus issued yesterday by Mr Fields' financial advisers, Parsons and Company in Glasgow, seeks to raise £2.3m in share capital. Mr Fields has put up a further £1m, half of which is in cash and the other half in guarantees.

Mr Fields told a press conference that he wanted the small investor to have an opportunity to take part in his share issue. Investors spending £3,000 for 5,000 shares will be allowed one free return flight a year. Investors buying 40,000 shares will be permitted unlimited return trips based on available space.

Mr Fields is a former partner with Mr Richard Branson in the

Virgin Atlantic airline. He gave up his directorship last year to set up Highland Express. The airline is to lease a refurbished Boeing 747 formerly used by American Airlines.

Highland Express forecasts a pre-tax profit of £250,000 in the first financial year to March 1987, rising to £500,000 in 1988.

Mr Fields has staked the future of his airline on regional passengers in Britain who do not want to use Heathrow, London, for their connections.

Making maximum use of the Boeing 747, Highland Express plans two flights a week to New York and two to Toronto from Stansted. It will fly twice a week to New York and once to Toronto from Birmingham.

All these summer time flights will pass through Prestwick, as will the four flights a week planned for winter flights to Toronto via New York.

## Museums gain new funding incentives

BY ANTHONY THORNCROFT

BIG CHANGES in the funding of the UK's nine leading museums and art galleries, including the British Museum, the National Gallery and the Tate, were announced by the Government yesterday. In future, they will be able to keep for their own use revenue accumulated through admission charges, restaurants and book stalls.

In the past, extra income was deducted from the museums' annual government grant which acted as a disincentive to self-help. In 1982 a House of Commons select committee recommended that the restriction be removed and, after discussions with the museums, the Government has approved the change.

At the same time, the Minister for the Arts, Mr Richard Luce, announced that for at least the next three years the museums' annual grants from the Government would not be affected by the new policy. But they could expect marginal annual improvements in their aid.

In another change, the Government has allowed the museums to carry over unspent money at the end of each financial year. This includes sums equivalent to 2 per cent of the annual grant and up to 10 per cent of annual receipts. In the past, any unspent money was clawed

back by the Government.

The Government estimates that out of a total subsidy of £26m for the nine museums in 1985-86, about £4m was accounted for by revenue that the museums had generated internally, although it says there was a natural incentive for the museums to minimise declared income.

The Government also announced provisional maintenance and purchasing grants for the museums in 1986-87, which indicate, on average, a 3.8 per cent increase over the current year. The figures are (with purchase grants in brackets): British Museum £11.9m (£1.49m); Victoria & Albert £3.75m (£1.15m); Science Museum £2.79m (£384,000); National Maritime £4.56m (£25,000); Imperial War Museum £4.51m (£120,000); National Gallery £3.83m (£2.75m); Tate Gallery £3.83m (£1.8m); National Portrait Gallery £1.5m (£310,000); Wallace Collection £97,000 (no purchasing grant).

Mr Luce said: "The Arts Council is considering an increase in subsidies to save the threatened Sadler's Wells theatre in London. Mr Luce told the Commons. He said the Government had ruled out keeping Sadler's Wells open through direct funding.

## Salomon prepares for move out of City

BY MICHAEL CASSELL, PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

SALOMON BROTHERS, the Wall Street investment bank, has confirmed that it is moving from the City of London to new offices in London's Victoria, where it will establish the largest trading floor outside the City.

The decision represents one of the most important City defections yet seen by a player in London's financial services community. The agreement is about to be followed by confirmation that Citicorp will take the major part of Cottons, a 212,000 sq ft office building at London Bridge City, a development on the south bank of the River Thames by St Martins Property.

Salomon has signed a rental agreement worth almost £3m a year at Victoria Plaza in Buckingham Palace Road. It is a 193,000 sq ft office building funded by Norwich Union and developed by Greycoat London, a company owned jointly by Greycoat Group and Sir Robert McAlpine.

Salomon, which has been negotiating with the developers for several months, will occupy 151,000 sq ft of floorspace and will pay al-

most £20 a sq ft for its accommodation, against top City rents of £35 a sq ft. The deal involves a 25-year lease but it is understood that a section of the floorspace will be subject to a break clause, enabling the tenant to give up the accommodation at an earlier date.

Last week it was revealed that Dean Witter Reynolds, the securities subsidiary of Sears, Roebuck, had pulled out of negotiations to occupy the remainder of the building. Greycoat said it expected to fill the space within "the next few weeks."

Salomon is expected to announce full details of its plans for Victoria Plaza tomorrow, but they are known to include a one-level trading floor of around 50,000 sq ft, created by filling in two atriums that formed part of the building's original design.

The decision means that Greycoat can press on with plans for the 350,000 sq ft second phase of the Plaza project for which full planning consent has been obtained.

The building could be completed within four years and it is known that Comoco, the oil group, is interested in taking the entire property.

## Channel 5 launches new video venture

BY RAYMOND SNODDY

THE BATTLE for video film sales is about to intensify with the launch yesterday of Channel 5 - a video label which plans to market pre-recorded videos as if they were paperback books.

Classic films such as Citizen Kane, Fort Apache and Top Hat, music videos and children's entertainment are going to be offered at prices ranging from £5.99 to £9.99.

Channel 5 is a joint venture between Heron International, the diversified private group, and Polygram International, the record music company.

Mr Gerald Ronson, chairman of Heron, said yesterday he believed the new video venture would have a turnover of about £25m in its first year.

Between them the two groups have access to a library of 600 to 700 films. Heron and Polygram also announced yesterday that they had acquired Precision Vision from ACC to add to its video

titles. Mr Ronson said that plans to launch Channel 5 was one of the reasons why he had been a serious, but unsuccessful, bidder at the end of last year for Thorn EMI Screen Entertainment, which has a library of more than 1,000 films.

The first 50 titles to be marketed under the Channel 5 label will go on sale next month in retail outlets in the London area and will spread to the rest of the UK within the next six months.

Companies such as Cretiveer, the supermarket group, and Woolworth have already found in recent months that reasonably priced videos sell well. Woolworth is believed to have sold 700,000 Video Collection tapes in the past five months.

Mr Steve Massey, managing director of Heron Home Entertainment, believes that by 1987 more money will be spent on buying videos than renting them.

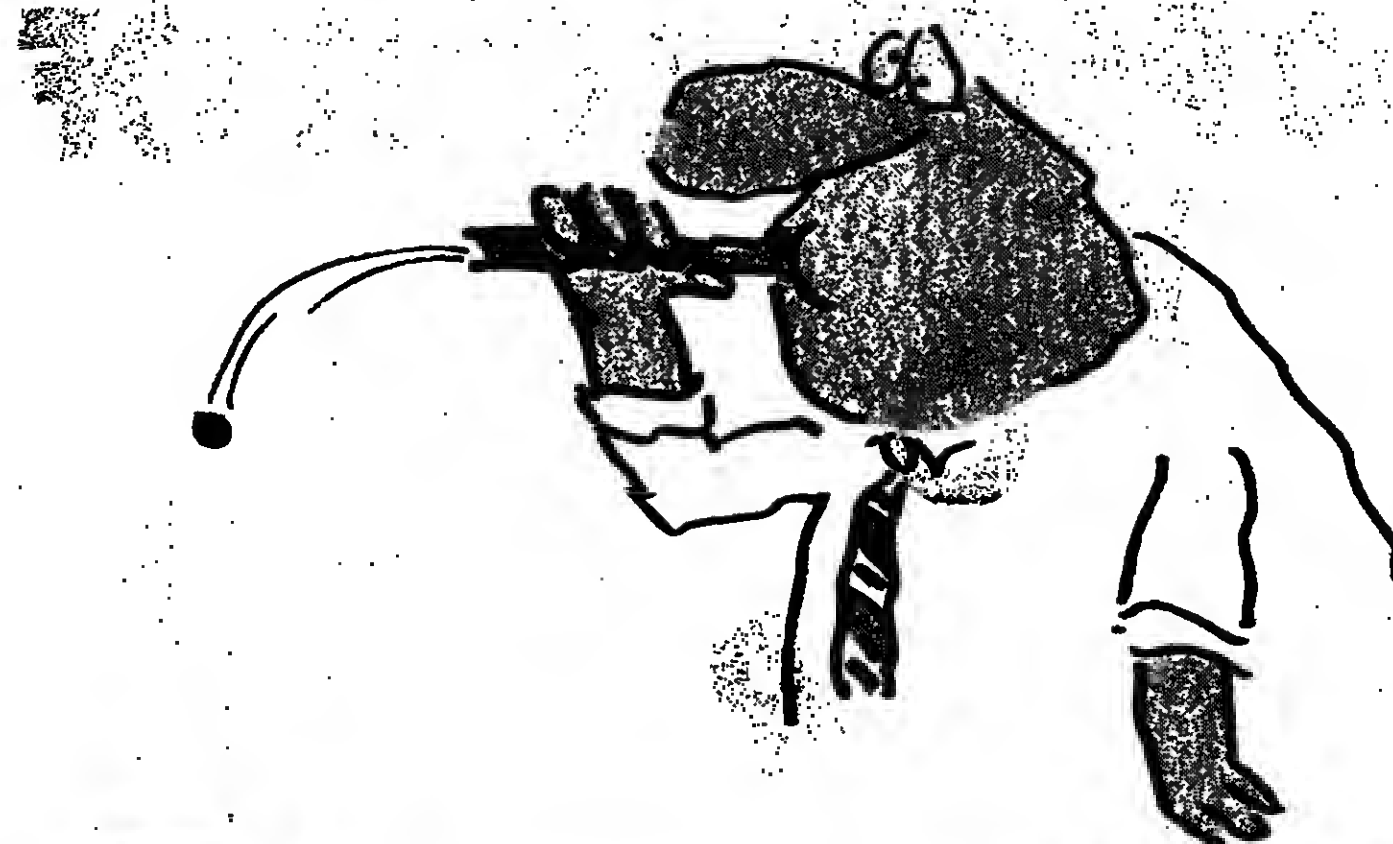
## UNLOCK THE HIDDEN SECRETS OF GROSVENOR HOUSE

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## TECHNOLOGY

# Don't call us, we'll call you —in mid-flight

BRITISH AIRWAYS expects early next year to become the first European airline to offer passengers an air-to-ground telephone service using advanced satellite communications technology.

Initially, the service will be operated on a trial basis on three of BA's Boeing 747 jumbo jets. It will enable passengers flying over Europe, the Atlantic, Africa and the Middle East to speak to telephone subscribers anywhere in the world.

A similar service already operates on US domestic flights using less sophisticated technology. In Europe, Lufthansa says it also has plans to offer in-flight telephony, though it gives no precise details. Air France is studying the idea.

The BA system will use a satellite stationed above the mid-Atlantic. This can send and receive signals over an area about 10,000 miles across, covering about one-third of the earth's surface.

The satellite belongs to the European Space Agency and is leased and operated by Inmarsat, the international marine and aeronautical satellite organisation, which will charge for channel time as it is used by BA.

Passengers will use a special

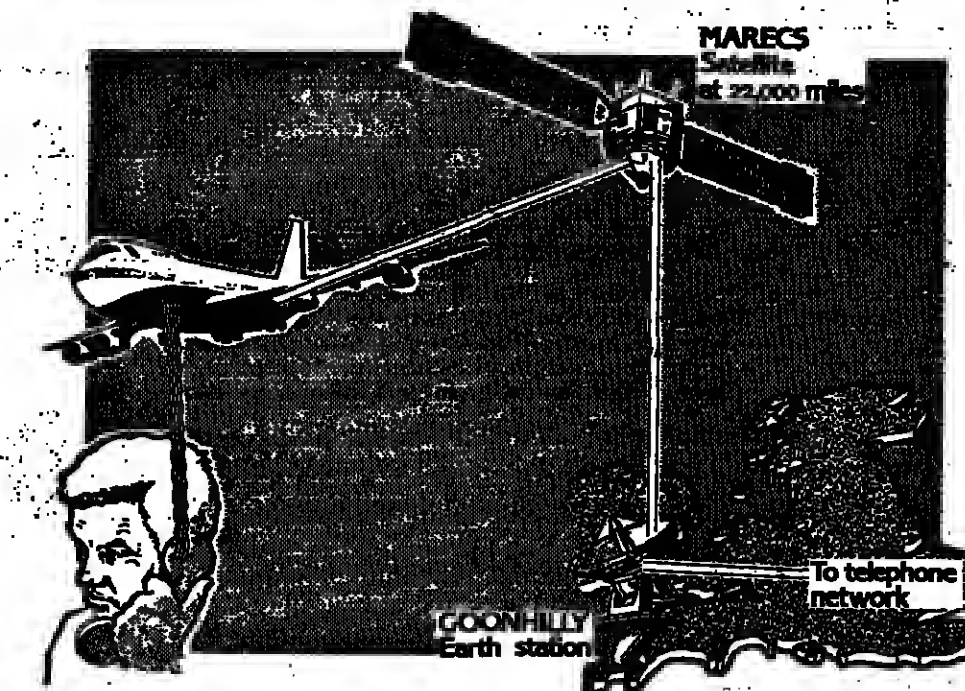
Geoffrey Charlish on a British Airways plan to offer an in-flight telephone service to passengers

airborne "phone box" with a cordless handset which they take back to their seats. The handset is released by inserting a credit card, the number of which is sent to the ground station for call charging.

Though it is technically possible to initiate calls in either direction, during the trials passengers will only be able to dial out. BA says the location of passengers on a specific flight is too complex and expensive for the first trials.

Such airborne units are already in use by 13 airlines in the US, supplied by Airfone of Oak Brook, Illinois, which will also supply units to British Airways.

Passengers' calls will leave the aircraft at satellite radio frequencies from a special aerial which will probably be positioned above and behind the flight deck. The design of the



aircraft is critical to the success of the project. It has to be small enough to avoid drag or structural problems, but big enough to pick up sufficient signal from the satellite to give good speech quality.

BA favours an aerial flush with the aircraft skin, but Mr Chris Webb, director of Racal-Decca Advanced Development of Watlington, which is designing the airborne equipment, says there are various options, including a projecting "blade" design.

Signals from the aircraft will be received by the dish aerial on the satellite, amplified, and relayed to British Telecom's ground station at Goonhilly.

Passengers will be able to contact their destination, for example, to book hotels and cars

From there, the call will be manually re-dialled into the UK and European telephone networks by an operator.

Mr Jeff Maynard, telecommunications general manager at BA, plans other uses of the air-to-ground link apart from business telephone calls. For

example, passengers will be able to contact destination cities in advance to book hotels and cars, or dial into information databases in order to plan or modify their trip abroad.

The system may also be used for long-range air traffic control. At the moment, although the aircraft captain knows his position within a fraction of a mile, there is no automatic way of making it known to the airline offices at the two ends of the journey.

The system will use digital transmission, enabling it to send digital position information just as easily as speech, using data fed from the aircraft's inertial navigation system.

## How the aircraft telephone is flying high in the US

In the US, in-flight telephone services have caught on rapidly since they were introduced 18 months ago. The services are available in 200 aircraft operated by 13 airlines. According to Airfone, the leading supplier of airborne and ground station equipment for every 100 passengers making flights, over 20 calls will be made on average.

Instead of a satellite, the US system uses 60 VHF ground stations distributed throughout the country. To date, Airfone has spent about \$160m (£71m) building the system, but will not disclose revenues.

Sandra Cochran, company secretary, says the airlines are actively using the service as a cost-cutting device. The Federal Communications Commission, which had

previously resisted allocating frequencies to the service, regarding it as something of a luxury, has relaxed for the time being and extended Airfone's experimental licence for another two years.

Airfone's next product is a "one per seat" telephone, with a cord, so that users do not have to get up to initiate a call.

Mrs Cochran has recently been in Europe to drum up interest in the Airfone terrestrial approach. But satellites seem a better proposition for Europe. With a multitude of national boundaries, the interworking of many small ground stations, "handing on" aircraft and charging could be difficult. Even so, Airfone says its system, especially its charge with ground stations, is better than the \$100,000 each.

## Spikes provide clue to a strong bond for industry

The clue to a strong joint in adhesive-bonded aluminium structures is a dense surface pattern of sharp spikes of alumina (aluminium oxide) a few microns high, growing from the metal surface.

This is revealed in a series of vivid electron micrographs obtained by David Arrow-smith and his co-researchers at Aston University, Birmingham. They are using a scanning electron microscope to study adhesion aluminium surfaces by direct examination.

Their finding could have an important influence on whether batch processes currently used for the adhesive bonding of

David Fishlock, Our Science Editor, on research at Aston University which could influence adhesive bonding in the car industry

aluminium alloys in the aerospace industry can be transferred successfully to continuous production lines, making cars.

Lecture to the Institute of Metal Finishing, showed how for a strong bond with a wide distribution of stress at the interface, it is necessary to develop the very peaky surface pattern.

The alumina spikes interlock with the adhesive, mechanically reinforcing it in the same way as high-tensile aluminium whiskers can be used to reinforce a polymer matrix. Phosphate ions absorbed on to the alumina surface during the etching process which produced the spikes can increase the bond strength and prevent weakening of the alumina by hydration.

The best bond strength obtained in this way is nearly double the strength of bonding between smoothed aluminium surfaces, which have been only degraded and etched. A final dip in dilute phosphoric acid after the spikes have been etched adds

an extra 5 per cent to the bond strength, by allowing adhesive to penetrate more deeply into the aluminium oxide.

Adhesive bonding by the car industry for a new generation of fast-economy cars, will require high-speed manufacturing. Dr Arrow-smith says Aston has studied new ways of pretreating aluminium at high speed, and shown the superiority of alternating current (AC) anodising in phosphoric acid.

Now his group is investigating mixed-acid electrolytes and the production of a multi-layered anodic oxide surface tailored to motor industry needs.

## IT—and getting it right first time

A SOFTWARE-BASED technique called Tetraarch that allows medium-to-large organisations to plan and develop a computerised information system, with some assurance of getting it right first time, has been devised by EA Computers and Telecommunications, a London consultancy.

Mr John Emberton, product manager, says up to half a company's spending on information technology goes on "re-development", a euphemism for correcting mistakes made the first time. About two-thirds of IT implementations overrun, both the time and money originally allocated.

Tetraarch "puts business first, computers second," says Mr Emberton, who will provide consultancy and software to run on an IBM PC, so that an information systems planner can judge where IT investment should be concentrated.

PA claims Tetraarch "offers the potential for up to 30 per cent savings on development costs." It also promises to free up the system with flexible and appropriate hardware, software, and operating systems, an activity which accounts for 55 per cent

Geoffrey Charlish on a technique based on software that may help companies to save money

of total software development expenditure in the UK, according to PA.

Mr Emberton claims that, in many cases, systems are planned despite user needs rather than because of them. He says so far there has been "no proper methodology that will integrate the stand-alone capacity planning and similar tools already available."

Tetraarch tackles the problems on a wide front, starting with the key business issues, working through systems analysis and design and ending with software development. Hardware planning, run, input/output and the system with flexible and appropriate hardware, software, and operating systems, an activity which accounts for 55 per cent

The good news is FERRANTI Selling technology

## Shrinking dictating cassette

THE TAPE cassettes used in hand-held dictating machines continue to get smaller. The latest design, from Dictaphone, measures only 1.4 in x 1.1 in x 0.3 in, yet it can hold 30 minutes of speech a side.

Initially the cassette, designed with the assistance of Japan Victor Company (JVC), will be available only on Dictaphone office dictation machines, the first of which is the Extec pocket unit. This measures only 4.25 in x 1.75 in x 0.75 in and is light-weight.

The Extec has a liquid crystal display showing how much recording time has been used, the number of sessions on the tape and the length of each. The display also shows the location of any special instructions to secretaries that have been recorded.

The machine has an increased sensitivity setting that allows it to be used in conferences and on "end of tape" approaching, warning tone. Dictaphone claims high speech quality for Extec and more details can be had on 0225 35211.

## Polishing the china

ABRA-FIN of Slough, Berkshire, has introduced vibratory machines which polish ceramic items such as cups and saucers following completion of the firing process.

The items are placed in a large bowl which is vibrated with small chips, some made from wood and others of ceramic substances. The chips remove small flakes of surplus material from the surface.

The company has developed the bowl with help from Central Ceramic Services of Stoke-on-Trent. Tel: 0753 75511.

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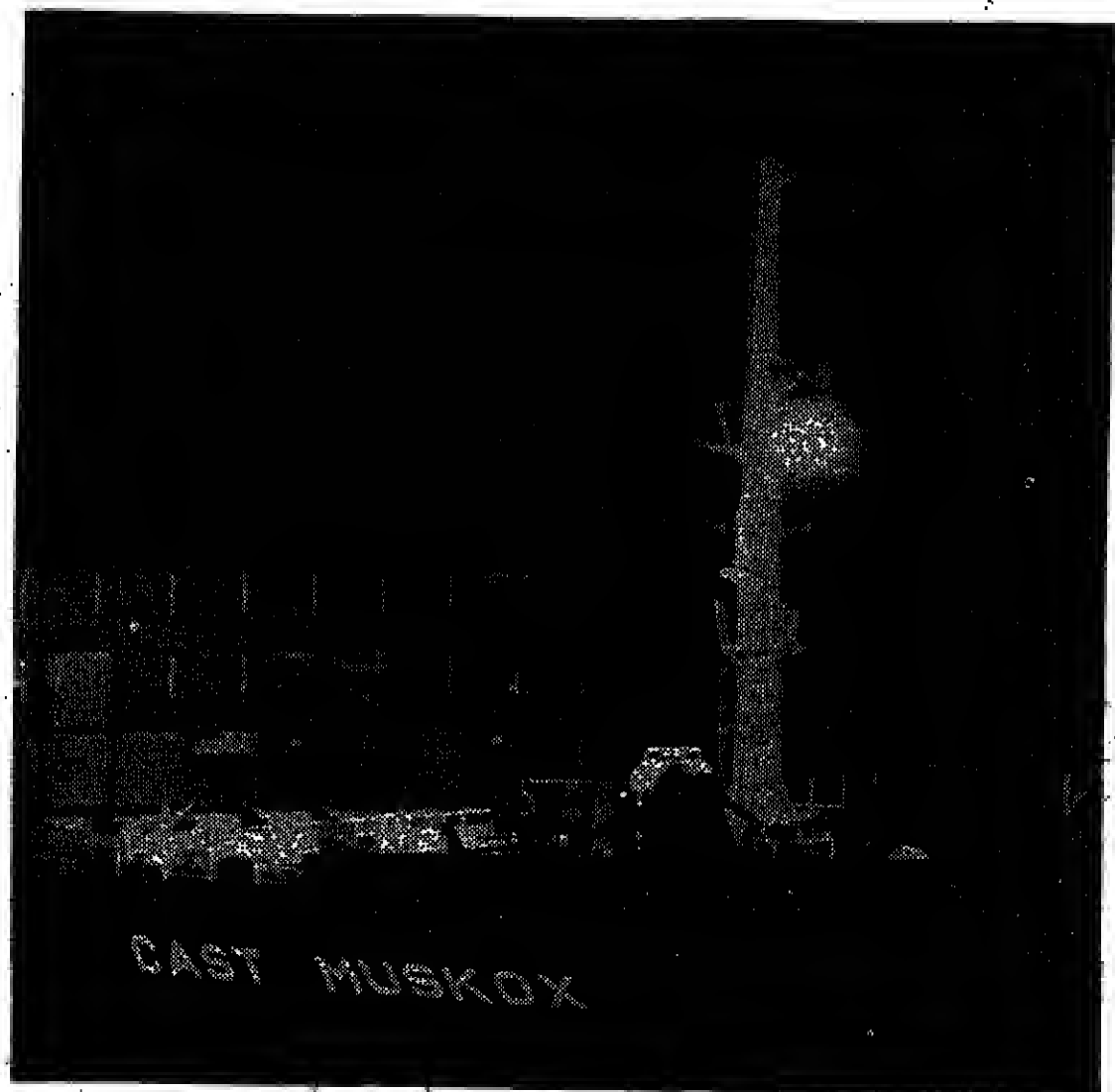
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## FINANCIAL TIMES SURVEY

Tuesday February 11 1986

## Countertrade

Although falling oil prices have thrown many deals off balance, countertrade has managed to hold on to its share of the market

## Price instability hits expansion

By FRANK GRAY

A SUDDEN FALL in world oil prices has thrown many deals off balance, countertrade has managed to hold on to its share of the market

The world trading phenomenon of recent years, countertrade, has managed to hold on to its share of the market. The world trading phenomenon of recent years, countertrade, has managed to hold on to its share of the market.

Those countries have been equally anxious to acquire western goods in many cases in order to modernise their own industries. The answer has been to exchange resources, such as oil, or relatively low technology products one way, industrial and consumer goods the other.

This growth has now been checked, however, by the difficulties encountered by some of the best-known practitioners of countertrade.

The Voest-Alpine steel group and Merz, a trading unit of Chemie Linz, have suffered heavy losses in connection with oil barter deals with Iran.

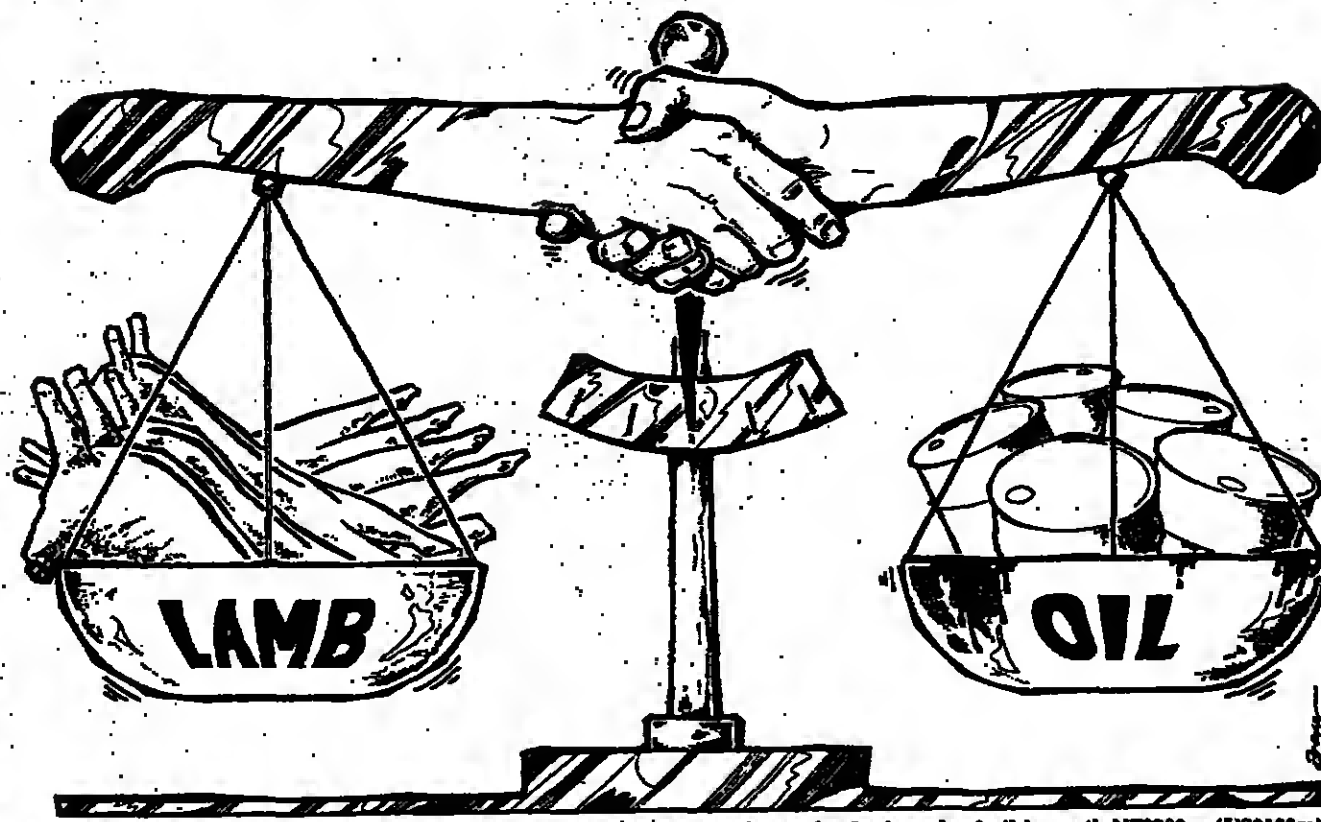
In Nigeria, which emerged a few years ago as Africa's most aggressive user of countertrade, largely based on oil resources, numerous deals have been cancelled or suspended, as unworkable. For a time, the country's countertrade policy was put into abeyance and, only more recently has it been cautiously reactivated.

Just as the oil price rises of the 1970s sparked the recession and gave impetus to the growth in barter, the sudden and sharp price fall is prompting widespread concern that oil may no longer be invulnerable as a tool in countertrade.

This unexpected reversal of fortune for oil barter specialists stems from the decision by the Opec members last year to end the two-tiered price system—the so-called Opec official price which was deemed artificially high, and the real, spot market price.

With this has come the end of the oil production quotas, the existence of which through last year caused many producers to conclude billions of dollars in barter deals to circumvent their own self-imposed restraints.

The spreading unpredictability of oil prices is now imperilling the oil barter market in a way that



A New Zealand deal with Iran to export 100,000 tonnes of lamb in exchange for 5m barrels of oil is worth NZ\$300m (US\$160m)

does not affect other commodity deals where prices, while low, are far more easy to predict. Yet, while the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Gatt and other opponents of countertrade can take satisfaction that some of the dynamism has gone out of the practice, the fact remains that its growth potential is strong.

It is abetted by the halting recovery of the Western economies, lack of a cohesive programme to resolve the Third World debt crisis, and the ongoing weakness of the non-oil commodities, many of which are the sole items of trade for developing countries.

In recent months, Malaysia, advised by Barclay Bank of the UK, has struck up a national countertrade policy.

Pakistan, which has long countenanced bartering on an unofficial basis, is now commissioning several Western trading companies to use countertrade specifically to improve the quality and balance of its trade. Greece, with the support of its banking community, has set up an organisation to handle countertrade.

In some South American countries, such as Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Brazil, an increasing number of state or large private companies are using reciprocity as a lever when concluding deals with foreign suppliers.

Nowhere is this more evident than in Turkey, where a long saga surrounding the supply of \$2.5m in F-16 fighter aircraft by General Dynamics of the US continues. US trade officials

believe the deal will be worth \$50m, of which \$30m is likely to be offset by trade.

The sophistication with which countertrade is being practised suggests that it has been far more prevalent in the post-war trading system than has so far been admitted or recognised.

The countertrade involvement of the US—nominally an opponent—was underlined in a recent International Trade Commission report. The report said that in 1984 alone some \$7.1bn in sales agreements involved countertrade, of which military-related offsets amounted to \$5.5bn. The countertrade obligations incurred as a result of those deals required US companies to handle some \$2.7bn in transactions with their customers.

Political concern has been voiced in Washington about the offsets, and the loss of US technical leadership through technology transfer abroad, and this has prompted a series of on-going hearings by the House banking sub-committee.

The evidence given, however, sought to allay fears on this. Mr James Blaker, the Deputy Assistant Defence Secretary, told the committee that the offset programme was important in that it gave US alliance partners a capacity for self defence and helped create a multinational defence force. Technology transfer was not such that the US defence base had been eroded, he said.

The committee was reminded at various times that US multinationals, particularly in the aerospace field, employed teams of people whose role was

to purchase goods from overseas customers. Indeed, it was the US offset programme, begun in the early 1950s, that provided the basis for its subsequent handling of countertrade.

Mr Joel Johnson, a vice-president of the American League for Exports and Security Assistance, sought to discourage Washington's involvement in setting policy for his group's members, which include the big aerospace concerns. While cash-for-goods was desirable, American companies had to be competitive.

Any effort to allay the use of countertrade would have to be done on a multilateral basis, and not be just a unilateral attempt to "fix" something the US deemed was wrong. He added that information about offset was sensitive and any government mishandling of it "would whet the appetites of foreign customers for even more."

One of the main hurdles the system still has to overcome, however, is the continued opposition of the international economic establishment.

In a report issued last year, OECD found that countertrade accounted for just 5 per cent of world trade, that is about \$80bn. While the figure is generally conceded as far too modest by many trading organisations, the OECD concedes that the practice has grown sharply. It notes that, from the company point of view, the use of countertrade, or more simply reciprocal trading, to help win an export order, has its appeal.

OECD, nevertheless, sees dangers to the world trading system from too widespread a growth in the practice. Gatt's case, too, is that bilateralism distorts the normal growth of trade and that it often perpetuates inefficiencies in a specific nation's trading industries.

Even worse, it excludes non-participating countries from expanding their trade and often locks countries into long-term and disadvantageous trading patterns, as is common within Comecon or among certain western nations, such as Finland, which trade heavily with the Comecon bloc.

"Now they find the costs of repayment or refinancing seriously affected by demands for this commodity outside their control—such as the US budget deficit."

"The purveyors of money have a selling job to do in many parts of the world today," he said. "There is a confidence gap to be made up."

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"Substituting discriminatory, bureaucratic decision-making for the impersonal workings of market forces may buy some peace in the short run, but only at a heavy cost in terms of its impact on the medium-term prospects for friendly commercial and political relations," says the Gatt report.

The long-term professionals in the business privately agree with the Gatt's concern. But they point out that countertrade will not go away as long as there is a debt crisis and as long as a vast part of the world is devoted to centralised planning with all the associated problems of lack of convertible currencies.

As a British Trade Department official recently told a trade seminar, it was perilous to be too sanctimonious about so-called pure trade. Was not money itself a volatile commodity, he asked? And were not the money merchants responsible for much of the Third World debt problem?

"Now they find the costs of repayment or refinancing seriously affected by demands for this commodity outside their control—such as the US budget deficit."

"The purveyors of money have a selling job to do in many parts of the world today," he said. "There is a confidence gap to be made up."

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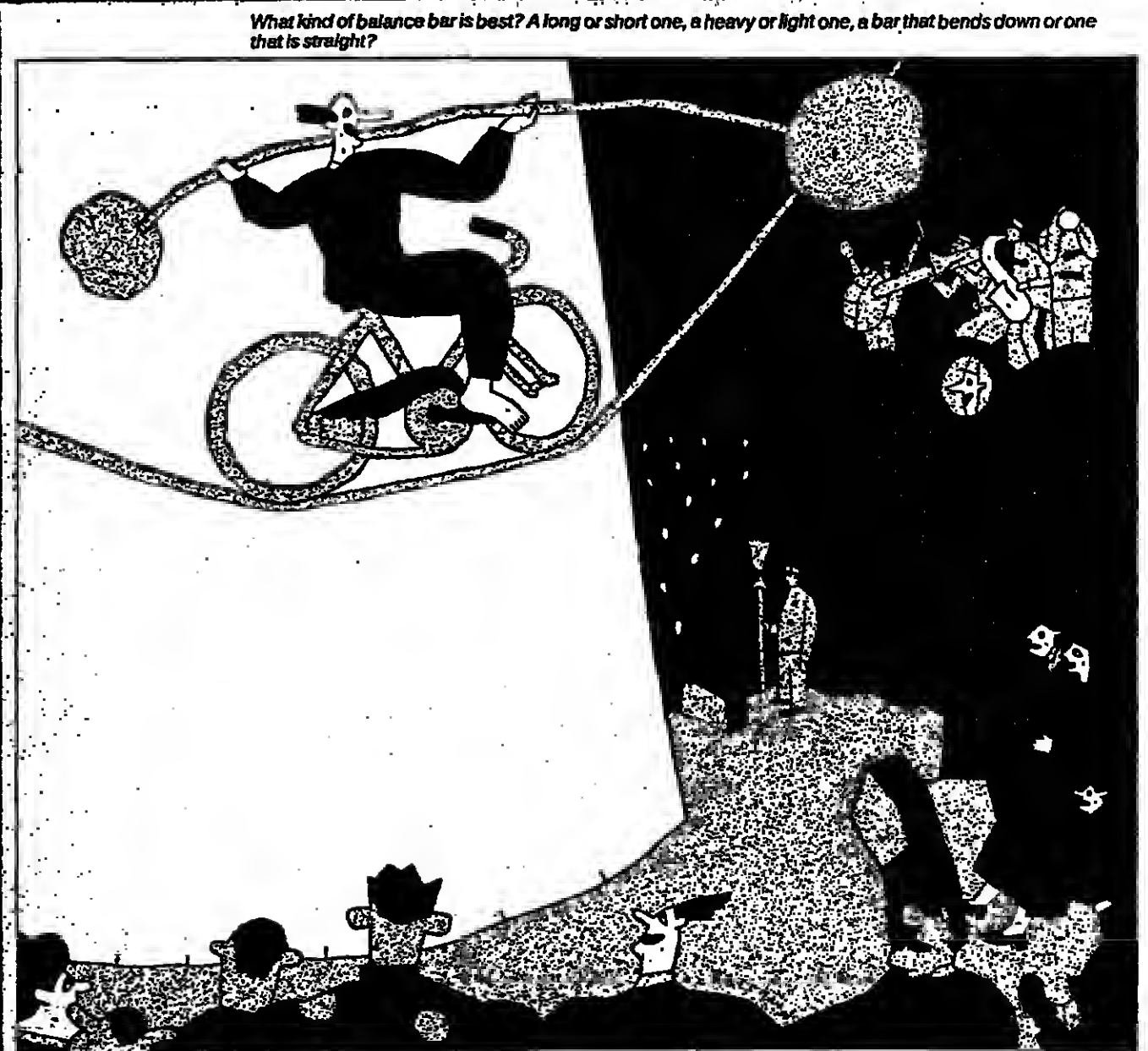
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## Countertrade 2 More careful scrutiny of the big deal

View from  
the City  
FRANK GRAY

BRITISH BANKERS and traders specialising in countertrade are in virtually unanimous agreement that the chaos that accompanied the growth in the worldwide use of barter in the first part of this decade has now given way to a period of welcome maturity.

This levelling off is reflected in both the higher quality of inquiries they are receiving from would-be customers and in their own more sensible screening of proposals for countertrade deals.

At the same time, while the market continued to show growth in 1985, a certain shaking out is occurring that is seeing many trading organisations severely curtail their exposure in what is an intriguing but sometimes unremunerative trade practice.

"What we have seen in the last year is a greater degree of professionalism in handling countertrade proposals," says Mr Alan Linger, the countertrade manager for Lloyds Bank. "We are much more swift to say not to deals that we do not think will happen."

"We estimate that about one in 20 proposals deals stands a chance of taking off. The ratio used to be much higher."

To a large extent, the changed trader/customer approach has been facilitated by the countless conferences throughout the industrialised world in recent years dealing with the growth in countertrade, which is variously gauged to account for between 5 per cent and 30 per cent of all world trade.

"Any business with capable management is now aware of countertrade and what it entails," notes Mr Colin Conery, National Westminster Bank's countertrade specialist. "This is not to say that they have in-house teams themselves to deal with it but they know better than ever where to go for help."

One indicator of the maturation is the disappearance of what in the trade is known as the "ticky hunter," the trader who proposes the particularly zany deal, so many of which added colour to the early days of the barter boom.

Some proposals have just enough scope to merit actually opening a file by a bank or trading organisation, such as a

recently proposed oil barter deal with Iran that would have included British-made false teeth as an item of countertrade.

Morgan Grenfell, the merchant bank, in fact concurred a deal involving shipment of Raleigh bicycles to Zanzibar in exchange for textile products.

Midland Bank's UK and Viennese countertrading divisions combined to help put through a film boiler export deal to Malta by Foster Wheeler UK. The deal required another UK company to step up exports of stainless steel sinks.

Many countertrade specialists say that such deals remain tantalising and that it sometimes takes an effort of will to say no to them at an early stage. Bankers, as opposed to the specialised trading companies, feel comfortable with deals ranging anywhere between film and film.

Often they are smaller, particularly if they involve trade in Comecon, an area of speciality especially strong with Kleinwort Benson, which is a partner with Polish and Italian banking interests in Centro Bank of Austria, a Comecon specialist.

Mr John Burge, Kleinwort Benson's countertrade manager, says Comecon has always provided steady business, but the real spur is in developing new markets.

Indonesia, for example, was a focus of worldwide attention a few years ago when it formally established a national countertrade policy for many goods except oil. Business there has now become more regular, and focus is shifting to other markets, such as Malaysia where countertrade is becoming obligatory in many deals.

The view is shared by Mr Ed Miller of MG Services, the London-based countertrading arm of the Metallgesellschaft metals group of Frankfurt. His company expects to participate this month in a countertrade policy being formulated by the Government of Pakistan, where

trade is in chronic deficit. Despite problems in Latin America, many countries there are still deemed attractive for countertrade.

Brazil has no national government policy but many state-owned companies do have policies and they implement them," says Mr Miller.

China, probably the most universally tantalising market among the countertrading fraternity, is also sharpening its expertise in providing consultancy facilities for various national interests, which works as a nice flip should actual structuring of formal deals prove less successful.

Big trading companies such as MG Services see banks as basically support services, particularly in administration and documentation of deals, such as handling of letters of credit. Clearing banks often

perceive themselves as capable of being mainstream traders. Merchant banks express envy at the clearer's because of their ability to draw on the resources of their export finance departments.

"Merchant banks basically must be profitable on specific deals and we cannot allow our countertrade operations to run at a commercial loss," says Mr John Cheate of Samuel Montagu.

While London has emerged as one of the premier centres for countertrade, it is generally conceded that most business involves non-UK concerns. Some 80 per cent of British exports is done on open account—basically cash for goods—a figure that has remained constant for some years, said one banker.

"This would indicate that not much new business is coming out of the UK."

The surfeit of countertrading organisations or the expansion of existing trading units that

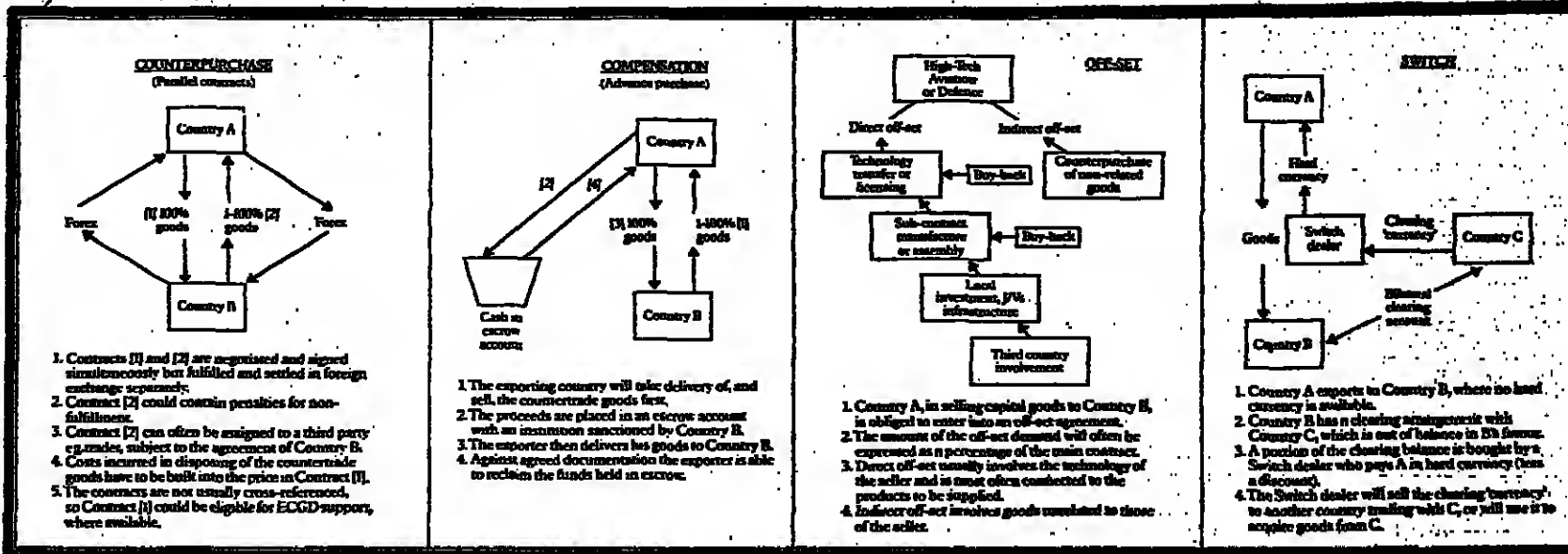
occurred during the height of the recession has been sealed back in the last year.

The London office of Philip Brothers, the US trading company, has had its share cut sharply in the last year since takeover of Salomon Brothers, the US investment bank. Belt-tightening on a smaller scale has affected the London countertrade sections of Lazard Frères, the UK merchant bank, and Citicorp of the US.

These are sufficient reasons why a cautious approach to countertrade is preferred to the more adventurous approach.

Mr Roy Bracher of Manufacturers Hanover, the US bank with London as its countertrade base, says: "Barter must support the mainstream trading interest of the bank, and the bank must see why one should not go off on tangents."

"It is the best to remain lean and country-specific and not try and conquer the world."



LONDON TRADERS are fond of telling the story of the chemical products group with strong ties with Eastern Europe. When the company's representatives arrive on a client's doorstep in, say, Prague or Budapest, they immediately present a long and impressive shopping list of what they want to purchase. While the offer is always serious, it is the opening gambit in what is the basic objective of the mission—to sell the company's own goods.

The transaction might be called "reverse countertrade," a specialist's long accustomed to the intricacies involved in doing business with Comecon, prefer to call it "reverse barter."

Reverse barter won't be found in any normal glossary of countertrade terms, but it can apply to virtually any of the numerous techniques involved in reciprocal trade. It depends on the skills of the party who initiates the proposed deal.

The following is a digest

of definitions describing types of transactions:

• **BARTER:** A straightforward exchange of an exporter's goods for the goods and service supplied by the importer. Cash is not a major component except for commissions and service fees.

• **COUNTERPURCHASE:** Requires the exporter to accept part payment for his shipment in goods. Cash is usually the main ingredient, but the swapping of goods is crucial to completion of the deal.

• **BUY-BACK:** Regularly used in trade with the

traded economies, it applies often to projects whose output will be used to finance the deal. It is often used in markets deemed by the exporter to be strategically important over the long term.

• **OFF-SET:** Frequently used in large transactions among industrialised countries, or between industrialised and developing countries, and requires the exporter, usually of military or civil defence or aerospace equipment, to supply goods or services to the client country in return for plants, components or other

state industries, to "effect" the cost of the goods sold.

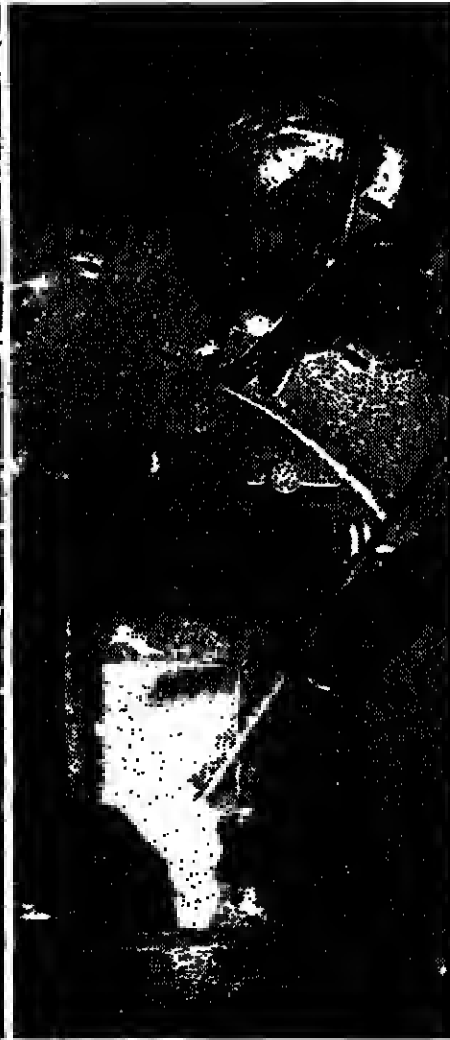
• **COMPENSATION:** Involves correcting imbalances in long-term bilateral arrangements and involving complex, long-term negotiations between buyers and sellers. It requires maximum skill, usually by means of national trading houses.

• **EVIDENCE ACCOUNTS:** Enables the exporter to debit his own counter-purchased imports and credit his exports over a period of time without the need for immediate cash payment. It is a means of matching the goods exported.

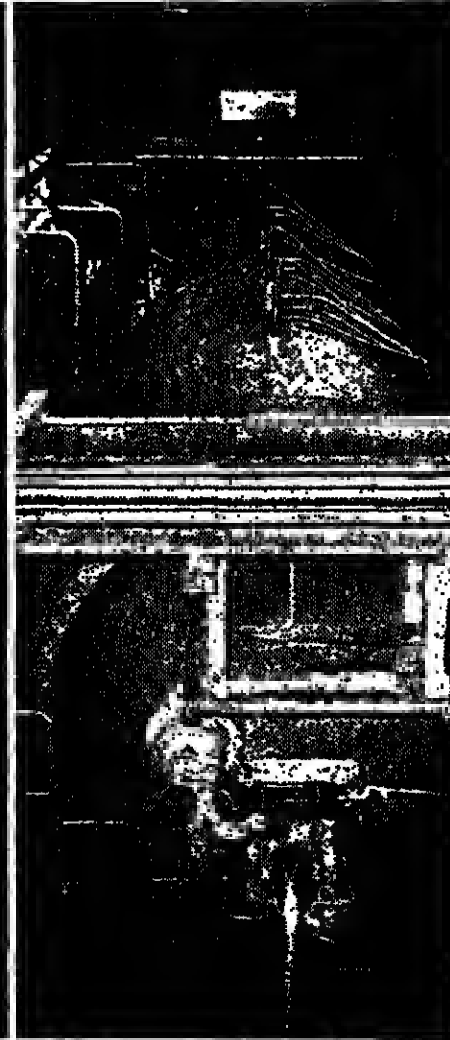
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Vienna  
PATRICK BLUM

VIENNA'S REPUTATION as a leading centre of expertise for countertrade has taken a knock following the disastrous losses incurred last year by two of Austria's largest trading houses as a result of heavy speculation on the international oil markets. The two companies, Voest-Alpine Intertrading, a subsidiary of Voest-Alpine, the large state-owned steel, engineering, electronics and trading group, and Merx, a subsidiary of the chemicals group Chemie Linz, another state-owned company, together posted losses in the region of Sch 3bn (\$17m) of which at least Sch 2.4bn were incurred by intertrading alone.

These spectacular losses however distort the true picture. There are numerous trading houses and banks in Vienna which continue to trade successfully and offer assistance in countertrading. They are rarely in the news and they tend to be secretive but they handle the smaller transactions which represent the bread and butter of the trading community.

Dr Robert Steple from Elmer and Urico Trading, two sister companies, says that the big headline catching deals which run into hundreds of dollars are exceptional. "Most of the business is in far smaller transactions," he says.

Intertrading and Merx's losses appear to have been almost entirely the result of highly risky speculations in oil futures based on an early fall in oil prices. When the fall eventually came it was too late for the two companies to handle. A government investigation is still under way to determine exactly what went wrong, especially with intertrading which suffered the most serious losses. Initial information suggests that the company sought unsuccessfully to boost its earnings by taking up short-term speculative positions. In addition, the company has faced problems with some of its large oil-futures contracts commitments.

This was the case with a \$2bn oil for food and equipment barter deal signed with Iran last year. The oil bought at high official prices could only be sold at a loss because of declining prices. The loss could in part be compensated by commission earned from West European companies involved in the barter deal but according to some officials the margin was too great to cover sufficiently the original price of the oil. Although the Voest-Alpine group benefited from the deal

since it opened avenues for additional exports, intertrading's attempts to cover the costs of the oil by charging high commission rates deterred prospective companies initially interested in participating in the countertrade deal.

The company's attempts to recoup some of its losses by intensifying its speculative operations, buying and selling oil futures, brought disastrous results. These operations were considerably increased in the second half of 1985. Officials suggest that over the summer and in early autumn intertrading had undertaken large futures commitments to sell oil by the end of November based on the premise that the price would fall. This had disastrous consequences since oil prices strengthened in the preceding period.

Some officials suggest that if the company had been able to hold out for a little longer it might instead have made a substantial profit, but it is not clear whether it was in a position to do that or whether it just panicked and sold earlier in order to cut its losses before closing its annual accounts for 1985.

Intertrading's rapid growth from a modest subsidiary set up seven years ago to handle Voest-Alpine's countertrade commitments to an international trading house ranking among the world's top six oil traders was not achieved without setbacks. Some officials say that it grew far too rapidly and that it had too few sufficiently experienced staff to handle such large business volumes.

Both companies have been ordered to stop all oil speculation and their managements have been replaced. If they need to enter oil barter deals in the future these will have to be done through OMT, the state-owned oil and gas company, government officials say.

Traders and bankers in Vienna believe that intertrading and Merx's misfortunes may act as a timely reminder of the need for caution, but they are worried that the two companies will damage Austria's reputation. Vienna, they say, is still attractive to companies because it is close to Eastern Europe with easy access to East European markets and because of the expertise that has developed in the city over the years, especially in countertrade.

Nevertheless, Vienna, like competing centres elsewhere, has felt the effects of tougher international competition and the economic downturn in many East European countries. Opinions vary about prospects but there is agreement that the

boom years of the 1970s are over.

There is a greater feeling of realism, says Dr Helmut Bohunovsky, from the Midland Export-Credit Bank. "Until 1981-82 many exporters wanted to penetrate the East European market and accepted all sorts of conditions," he says.

"Inexperienced companies got into trouble while others found terms increasingly unfavourable and expensive."

Many companies have now withdrawn from the East European market, closing down offices in Vienna or in Eastern Europe. He believes that there is a better appreciation of the difficulties and of the opportunities of the market.

"Now there is a more realistic situation than in the '70s," he says. Expectations have also been raised about opportunities that may be offered by the new five-year plans starting this year in the Comecon countries. According to bankers, trade and counterbalance are picking up with

most East European countries.

Despite hopes for further growth, Vienna's bankers and traders are increasingly diversifying their markets, using the experience gained in Eastern Europe to develop new business in the Far East and South America where countertrade is demanded of exporters.

Dr Alexander Waldstein from AWI, a subsidiary of the Creditanstalt Bankverein, says that five years ago Eastern Europe represented 80-90 per cent of his company's business. "Today over 80 per cent of our business is outside Eastern Europe," he says.

Not everyone is as enthusiastic. One banker who prefers to remain anonymous has a more sceptical view. The only real growth area is in conferences and seminars dealing with countertrade and its problems, he says. "That's the only countertrade business where you get hard cash on time and where you are assured of a profit," he says.

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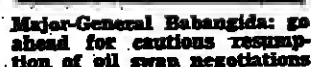
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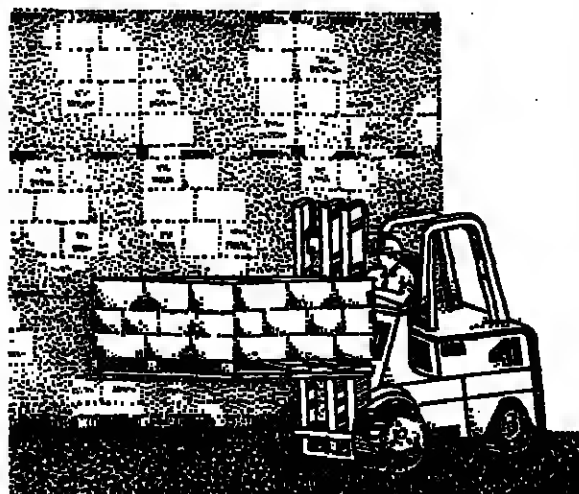
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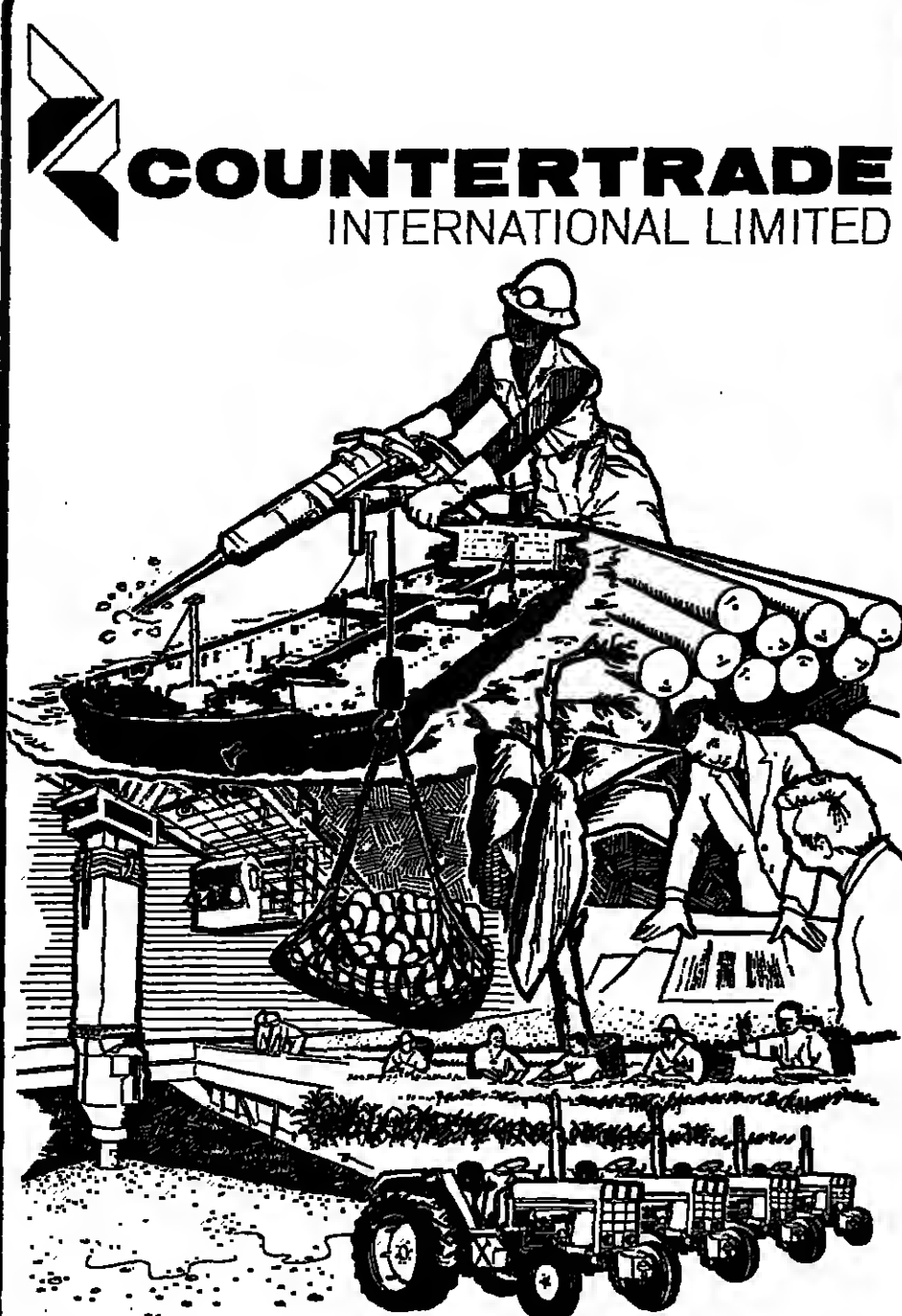
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### China

DAVID DODWELL

McDONNELL DOUGLAS, the US aircraft manufacturer, in April last year heralded a deal that had been six years in the making—the sale to Shanghai Aviation Industrial Corporation (SAIC) of 25 of its MD-82 twin-jets in kit form in a rare cash transaction worth an estimated \$600m.

The co-production deal was rare because it was not a joint venture—a common means used by Chinese companies to reduce the foreign exchange cost of establishing a venture—and because the Chinese Government was apparently willing to pay cash despite its acute shortage of foreign exchange.

These pushed by the terms of the deal probably had some questions answered last month when a team of McDonnell Douglas executives arrived in Shanghai to design a countertrade programme as a "complement" to the MD-contract that will help China to recoup some of the foreign exchange costs involved.

Hong Kong-based expert in countertrade, musing on how successful the comparatively inexperienced McDonnell Douglas team will be in generating exports for China on such a large scale, commented: "This is just one more aspect of the fierce competition over exports to China. Once upon a time, they would compete on price and product specification. Countertrade proposals are just one more aspect of competition, and without them chances of winning a contract are that much less."

Much attention has been given recently to the emerging importance of countertrade in China. In Shanghai alone, joint ventures agreed with Foxboro, the US control systems manufacturer, Volkswagen, the German car manufacturer, 3M of the US, making industrial machinery and other products, Schindler of Switzerland making lifts, and Peninsula Woollens, the Hong Kong knitwear group controlled by C. H. Tang, are among ventures that embody complex countertrade arrangements which success or failure is likely to depend.

While private sector deals such as these are comparatively new, countertrade in its broadest sense is widespread.

Countertrade is substantial on a government-to-government basis, not just with the Soviet bloc but with Brazil and a growing number of cash-strapped developing countries.

Trade with the Soviet Union was agreed at \$2.1bn in 1985, compared with \$1.2bn in 1984. Countertrade with other East European countries has grown similarly fast.

Countertrade arrangements are commonly used for commodity trade, arms sales, and as part of offset, buy-back and compensation agreements linked with investments or joint ventures in China.

If one includes all of these as countertrade, then Chinese suggestions that it accounts for about one-third of total trade may be plausible. According to Chinese customs statistics, China's total trade in 1985 amounted to US\$20.1bn, suggesting countertrade amounted to over US\$6bn.

This has focused attention on Hong Kong as a base for countertrade operations. Most recently the creation of a countertrade unit in Peking's Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade (Mofert) headed by Mrs Ye Linyun has made it clear that the Chinese Government is keen to explore countertrade potential.

There are a number of reasons why this has occurred. Most important, perhaps, is China's acute shortage of foreign exchange. According to Customs figures, the trade deficit in 1985 soared to \$13.7bn from \$1.4bn in 1984, suggesting that reserves amounting to about \$18bn at the end of 1984 have been seriously eroded. Equally significant is Peking's hope that countertrade arrangements can help China to break into protected markets, and help it to win a better share of international trade restricted by quotas and other protectionist devices.

A conspicuous target here is Japan, which in 1985 had a trade surplus of more than \$800 with China. Chinese officials see Japan's "sogo shosha"—the vertically integrated trading houses like C. Itoh, Misui and Mitsubishi—as tailor-made for facilitating countertrade.

China has been under pressure from Third World trading partners both to accept bilateral trade, and to accept countertrade terms. This has given Peking headaches, since it has little need of the raw materials and unsophisticated manufactures from these countries.

These in fact are often in direct competition with China's own exports.

One response has been to introduce "tolling" arrangements where, for example, Chinese exports can be matched against raw sugar, which is refined in China and then re-exported as refined sugar to Western markets.

Since many Chinese exporters have only recently opened their doors on the international market, they often lack international marketing and distribution knowledge and networks. Countertrade deals arranged through middlemen like Merban Pacific, a subsidiary of Continental Grain of the US, or MG Services, a partnership between Metallgesellschaft of West Germany and Louis Dreyfus of France, can provide such expertise.

Chinese officials have also come to realise that they have a unique opportunity to win the co-operation of a foreign corporation in boosting their export efforts when they are negotiating a prospective foreign purchase. The McDonnell Douglas deal offers a vivid example of this.

### Pragmatic

Unlike official attitudes in the Soviet bloc, the Chinese view of countertrade is thus highly pragmatic. Anything that can be sold for cash will be sold for cash. Traders say anyone looking for major institutional changes that might ease countertrade is probably in for a long wait.

Malaysia, which has been an important countertrade partner, is a case in point, and perhaps a victim of its own success in this regard. It has made great strides in diversifying its commodity output over the years in order to guard against being hit by a sudden drop in one commodity price.

Last year, for the first time in years, it saw the price of all its key commodities—palm oil, rubber, oil, tin—tumbling at the same time.

Furthermore, developing countries can no longer look, as they have tended to in the past, to international agreements between producing and consuming countries to boost or maintain prices. Nearly every international commodity pact that has functioned at one time or another in the last 20 years is now either defunct or in deep trouble.

The devolution of decision-making power over foreign trade from Peking to a plethora

## Low prices intensify competition

THE T.L.S. of the world's commodity markets show no sign of being cured, and in many cases are getting decidedly worse.

Virtually every important soft commodity or base metal market on which the developing countries depend is suffering from a mixture of low prices, stagnant markets and increasingly cut-throat competition.

This gloomy outlook has provided a fertile breeding ground for all manner of deviations from the multilateral trading system, including countertrade, over the past few years.

As far as the soft commodities—which are probably used to a greater extent in countertrade than the metals—are concerned, the picture is in many cases even more depressing.

To take a few examples:

- World free-market sugar prices fell to an all-time low in real terms last June, depressed by "dumping" by big exporters like the EEC, increasing protectionism in the US,

### Commodities ANDREW GOWERS

and the maintenance by subsidy of excessive levels of production all over the world.

Although consumption is expected to outstrip production for the first time in years this season, the market continues to be overloaded by a huge burden of stocks. Prices have been climbing steadily off the floor since last summer but they still remain well below the costs of production.

● Rubber prices have been on a steady slide, falling to their lowest level in three years in 1985 against a background of surplus production and sluggish consumption. That is bad news for the big producers in South-East Asia in particular.

● Cocoa prices—especially important for the economic health of West African countries like the Ivory Coast and Ghana—have been weakened by a production surplus last season.

● Tea prices—vital to India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Kenya—among others—have plunged precipitously from their peaks of 1984.

● Prices of the staple food crops, such as cereals, are also under heavy pressure because of a worsening trade war between big exporters like the EEC and the US. That might be good news for importers in Africa, for example, if only they could afford even the depressed prices.

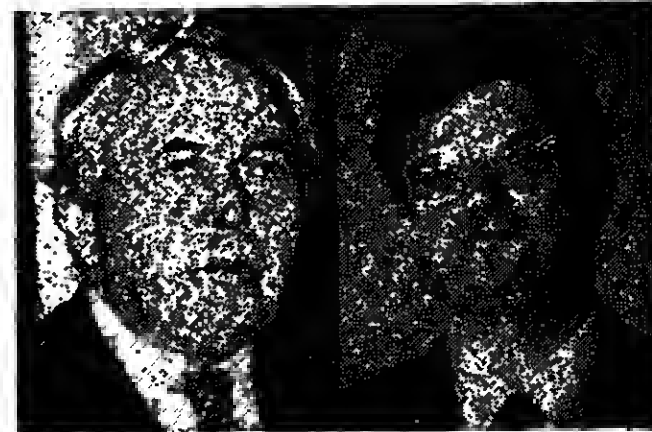
The list seems endless. Only coffee, in which prices have risen sharply in the last few months as a result of drought damage in the all-important Brazilian crop this year, provides a ray of hope for producers in Africa, Indonesia and Central America.

Even in that case, the producers' fears for the long term are not allayed. Higher prices will stimulate a race to boost output—resulting eventually in another damaging price crash as happened in the late 1970s.

This goes to the heart of the problem in a way. Most of the soft commodities can now be produced in a wider range of countries than before, and advances in agricultural technology have boosted yields. So prices are in general less vulnerable to climatically-induced shortfalls in one producing country—and even where they are, others will want to move in swiftly to fill the gap.

## Strong links with Romania

BY ALAN SPENCE



Lord Wilson, director, and Mr Nigel Gubie, chairman and managing director of Rindalbourne: showing patient persistence

audiences with President Ceausescu and a number of his key ministers, including, pivotally, Mr Vasile Pungau, the foreign trade minister, cemented a working relationship. During the visit of Lord Wilson's delegation last March Rindalbourne consolidated its trading activities with Romania in the form of a fifteen-point letter of intent, business globally valued at \$12m in 1985, \$18m in 1986, \$28m in 1987 and \$40m in 1988.

Of this overall sum, it was agreed that one-third would comprise the value of goods moved via Rindalbourne into Romania, while the remaining two-thirds would represent the value of goods exported from Romania via the firm.

The protocol, a 200 per cent countertrade arrangement (not unusual with present day Romania) covers a wide range of products, including exports to Romania of wool dyes, agriculturals, cotton and pharmaceuticals and exports from the country of textiles and light industrial goods.

Perhaps more significantly in terms of long-term value, that same delegation's visit yielded a major coking coal protocol. This, which owed something to a private meeting between President Ceausescu and Lord Wilson, envisages Rindalbourne eventually channeling up to 180,000 tonnes per month of good quality coking coal into Romania, which is expanding its coking production capacity, but encountering structural difficulties in boosting domestic coal output.

The visit of Lord Wilson's second delegation in October was closely followed by an agreement to begin shipments of up to 450,000 metric tonnes of coking coal (valued at \$28m-\$30m), against, once

again, purchases by Rindalbourne of textiles and light industrial goods. The arrival of the first cargo of coal, comprising around 50,000 tonnes, is expected shortly—with other envisaged at monthly intervals thereafter.

Although it was hoped that Rindalbourne would be shipping sizeable amounts of UK coking coal under the terms of this agreement, the National Coal Board has since made it clear that it does not expect to have significant quantities of the required quality, Rank 301, available in the foreseeable future.

Rindalbourne is, therefore, initially shipping US coal into Romania.

In constructing its general countertrade protocol with Bucharest—which the company is supporting with a recently negotiated \$100m credit—Rindalbourne has achieved the notable success of dealing across foreign trade organisations (FTOs). Countertrade arrangements with Romania have traditionally involved imports and exports being offset under the auspices of the same FTO. However, under the Rindalbourne Protocol, which involves several FTOs covering, for instance, chemicals, minerals and textiles, the trade flows must only balance globally, not centrally, on a one-third-two-thirds basis.

In recent months, Rindalbourne has looked at a number of ideas within the context of its trading links with Romania. One, for instance, envisaged Rindalbourne possibly assisting Romania with the purchase of a South Wales coking coal pit with payment to the National Coal Board perhaps involving coal mined from the pit itself. However, the cost of re-opening of the mine proved prohibitive. Another scheme, which may

stand a better chance of success, however, involves the possibility of Rindalbourne developing, as a joint venture with Salomon Bros of the US an aluminium sheet production facility designed to generate additional product, which Rindalbourne could sell against deliveries of coal and other commodities. The choice of aluminium sheet is deliberate—unlike, say, steel it is not subject to US import quotas.

Meanwhile, with the company's Romanian business now firmly underpinned, Rindalbourne is increasingly looking to the Soviet Union to construct countertrade accords. Simultaneously it is maintaining a close watch on the Chinese market, into which, for example, it may eventually export steel billets—as part of its countertrade business with Romania.

Alan Spence is Editor of International Trade Finance, a bi-monthly report produced by the Financial Times.

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## PROFILE: The Mediators From hustling to bartering



Richard Manney: a \$450m a year countertrading company

IT ALL started for Richard Manney in 1986 with \$60, a public phone booth and lots of time—television time.

He was a young hustler, brash but low key, who had started his own business in 1984 at the age of 20, trading prizes to TV game shows in return for promotion credit and getting paid himself with extra merchandise. That had all come crashing down with the quiz show scandals of the late 1980s, but Mr Manney resurfaced again, and in 1986 he founded the Mediators, a media buying agency which took payment in the form of merchandise which was ingeniously turned to cash.

Mr Manney and a close associate, Mr Tom Settnert, adapted the concept of "cross-pollination" in marketing. Paid in excess merchandise which they undertook to sell outside of its regular distribution channels, they convinced pharmacies to carry food products and put appliances in supermarkets.

They built new distribution networks and entered the premiums and incentives business. By 1990, Mr Manney had earned his first million dollars.

Business really took off in the recession of the early 1980s when US companies had surplus inventories and little hard cash. The Mediators sold them advertising time and took payment in the form of goods and services.

Eventually, the traders began to look to the international marketplace. In their first international venture, in the mid-1970s, they swapped hand-held calculators, quiz games, which National Semiconductor Corporation had in excess and could not dispose of domestically. The Mediators took the games to Latin America and got bananas, cotton and cash in return.

These days a simple barter deal is rare, he says. Counter-traders often link four or five transactions before everyone is satisfied.

The Mediators, now a \$450m a year privately-held company, has become one of the leading American counter-traders.

Nancy Dunne

## More companies turn to barter deals

The US  
NANCY DUNNE

OFFICIALS OF Universal Satellite Corporation were ecstatic last year when they won exclusive rights to distribute their video projection devices to theatres in remote rural communities in China. The deal they figured to be worth \$5m to \$10m a year was almost lost when last April the Chinese Government, short of hard currency, imposed exchange restrictions on all but the most vital imports.

American traders are learning that there is only one way to do business in China these days and that is through countertrade. The Mediators, a leading American countertrade business, is even now in the process of swapping 30,000 Apple personal computers to the Chinese Government. In return they will probably get silks, coal or oil.

Universal Satellite, too, has now turned to countertrade for the first time in its history. Working through International Capital & Technology of New York and Hong Kong, an old hand at arranging swaps with the Chinese, a straight barter deal was arranged which would allow Peking to pay for the pro-

jectors with rice, cotton-seed oil and other commodities which ICTC will sell in the world market.

Mr Henry Schwartz, president of Usatco, is so pleased that he is talking of arranging barter deals in South America, an area his company has been unable to penetrate in the past.

More and more US companies, unable to compete without it, are including countertrade in their deal making. According to Mr Richard Manney, president of the Mediators, countertrade now accounts for about 10 per cent of all American manufacturers' revenues. Within the next 10 years, it will become the force providing a third of all US manufacturers' revenues, he says.

### Overseas markets

"The US is no longer the golden marketplace it once was," says Mr Manney. "You can't count on US consumers to buy up everything you produce. Foreign countries have broken down our doors with better quality, more advanced goods at cheaper prices... it's increasingly vital that American companies do the same."

They must break into overseas markets and use the countertrade as one of the ways to do it. Estimates of worldwide coun-

### Non-military and military-related offsets

	1980	1982	1984
Sales agreements involving countertrade	\$m	\$m	\$m
Military-related (offsets)	8,568	732	3,890
Non-military	1,948	862	1,349
Total	8,416	1,715	7,139
Countertrade obligations:			
Military-related (offsets)	414	439	2,182
Non-military	487	479	580
Total	881	918	2,762

Source: International Trade Commission

tertrade vary widely, because few governments collect or publish data specifically to identify such transactions. The most comprehensive recent study in the US on countertrade was drawn from an International Trade Commission survey of over 300 corporations representing over \$150bn in export sales in 1984.

The study estimated that almost \$5.5bn in total US exports resulted from countertrade (excluding offsets) arrangements during 1980-84. About \$4.6bn worth of goods and services were expected to be included in countertrade deals last year.

The value of US companies' countertrade (including offsets) obligations with Europe grew more than fourfold during 1980-84, said the ITC, while such obligations with Asia more than tripled. Latin American

1980-84, imports resulting from non-countertrade totalled only \$1.8bn during the same period. Additional goods and services were either sold abroad, absorbed by foreign American affiliates or sold to a trading company.

The majority of American businesses engaging in countertrade reported favourably to the ITC about their experiences. They said that the deals had resulted in increased employment, sales and production efficiencies.

While many US companies are reporting a growing acceptance of countertrade, Administration officials have shied away from government-sponsored deals—with the exception of three barter conclaves with Jamaica when the US got bauxite for its strategic stockpile in exchange for surplus government-owned farm goods.

Mostly, the Administration's free traders complain, the barter proposals received in recent years founder because one party wishes to trade a commodity the other does not need. Mexico and the Dominican Republic both offered to swap fluorapatite, a commodity the Administration has decided is no longer needed for the stockpile.

In a recent report to Congress, an Administration task force said problems have arisen in

determining the relative value of commodities to be exchanged. "One party is often attempting to obtain higher value for its commodity than prevailing cash prices," the task force said.

Indonesia and Nigeria offered the US petroleum barter but both wanted higher than the Opec prices, the task force said. Critics believe officials do not try very hard to conclude any deals they philosophically oppose.

### Here to stay

Individual government officials and American businessmen, however, insist that international barter is here to stay.

Mr Robert Copsken, an energy trade policy specialist in the energy department, urged petroleum deals, noting that Nigeria had renewed its commitment to countertrade, even though countertrade—related corruption was an issue in the military coup last August.

An oil trader with Rudolf Wolff commodity brokers believes that countertrade in oil will be used too in technology transfers with China and the USSR. If Americans do not recognise the inevitability of countertrade, says another analyst, then they will miss the boat on many a deal which could benefit the massive US trade

## Brazil leads the way in the region

Latin America  
ROBERT GRAHAM  
Latin America Editor

BRAZIL REMAINS the most active proponent and exponent of countertrade in Latin America. With annual exports of nearly \$20bn, Brazil also happens to be the most successful exporting nation in the region with the largest range of products.

This position does not simply reflect the importance of Brazil and its economy serving a population of 130m. It also underlines a much greater dynamism and willingness to explore all avenues, even non-traditional ones, to promote exports.

Brazilian officials have never felt constrained by the "idea of reciprocity" objections of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to countertrade. Indeed countertrade is regarded as a useful means of circumventing protectionism, international systems of commodity quotas and credit difficulties.

Nevertheless, 1985 saw a lessening of the tempo of countertrade deals by Brazil, and the trend seems to have been reflected more generally throughout Latin America, according to officials dealing with trade in the region. The same officials are cautious about being dogmatic since there are no reliable statistics on countertrade and they freely admit to being often unaware of private sector deals, especially small-scale operations.

### Austerity plans

Three main reasons are given for the lesser prominence in 1985 of countertrade. Firstly, the vast majority of Latin American governments have continued to operate or introduce tough budgetary plans which have squeezed domestic consumption, cut back public sector spending and penalised imports. Thus trade policies which have been aimed at curbing imports, even if balanced by an equivalent export sale, have tended to be discouraged at the expense of hard currency earnings.

Secondly, the expansion of the US economy in 1984 absorbed considerable excess domestic capacity in Latin America and accounted for the principal increase in trade. Thirdly, the sheer complexity of putting together countertrade packages, with attendant problems of bureaucratic delay and corruption, have continued to act as a disincentive, especially as most governments in the region have insisted that countertrade can only take place with non-traditional products.

For instance, Colombia's policy of refusing to allow countertrade deals with traditional products has been thoroughly vindicated by the sudden rise in the price of coffee in early January, 1986. Colombia also incidentally held out for a mainly cash transaction with Israel over exports of coal last year, even though the Israelis pushed hard for an exchange of goods.

The extent to which bureaucratic difficulties and the possibilities of corruption weigh against countertrade could well be determined by the fate of important deals between Brazil and Nigeria. Largely through countertrade, Brazil has become, within the last two years, one of the top five suppliers of the Nigerian market.

The big deals between the two countries began in 1984 based on

the purchase of oil from the Nigerian national oil concern, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation by Petrobras, its Brazilian opposite number. The deal was arranged through Brazil's leading trading company, Cotta Comercio Exportacao e Importacao.

In return for supplies of Nigerian crude worth some \$500m over a 12-month period, Cotta agreed to supply a wide range of goods that included knocked down vehicle assembly units from Volkswagen Brazil, salt, steel, sugar and synthetic fibres to refractory bricks and iron ore.

With the change of government in Nigeria in January, 1986, Lagos announced it was reviewing countertrade deals and would limit all such future operations in view of the opportunities for corruption. As for Petrobras, the chief driving force behind countertrade, it still believes this is a very effective means of ensuring supply without damaging the nation's balance of payments.

### Energy deals

However, economists both inside and outside the government of President Sarney are now reassessing the strong emphasis on countertrade in Brazil's energy imports given the weak state of world oil prices and Brazil's own prospects of moving towards energy self-sufficiency in the next decade.

Until now the bulk of Brazil's imported energy needs have been secured through countertrade deals—with Algeria, Angola, Iraq, Iran and the Soviet Union. In some instances, Cotta has been a catalyst in putting together the package. In others it has been a contracting company (Noborara selling oil platforms for Soviet crude).

The practice of goods exchanged is not always easy to know because military equipment, especially to Iran and Iraq, is included. In the same way, Israel which has substantial sales of small arms and sophisticated military equipment to the region is understood to accept countertrade arrangements. Arguably military goods exported from or imported to Latin America, and energy imported into the region account for the largest amount of countertrade.

Since 1980, Argentina and Mexico, the region's other big traders, have eschewed countertrade. In the case of Mexico this is because the main export market is the US. In Argentina, the authorities and the business community alike remain deeply influenced by their historic experience with easy cash exports like grain and meat.

Peru, in a more desperate economic situation, has been willing to contemplate countertrade, particularly with the Soviet Union. But here again the authorities and the business community alike remain deeply influenced by their historic experience with easy cash exports like grain and meat.

It is also noteworthy that countertrade occurs less between regional partners and much more outside Latin America. This is not just because exports often tend to be complementary. Rather there is much greater mistrust within the region of relying upon an exchange of goods, and, in the case of countries with common borders, contraband is preferred.

This said, countertrade has established itself as an attractive alternative means of trading and Latin America has about the GATT norm of 8 per cent of trade being conducted in this form.

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# THE MANAGEMENT PAGE: Small Business

EDITED BY CHRISTOPHER LORENZ

ISOTRON provides clear evidence of how an opportunistic mind can put two companies together and make a whole much greater than the sum of the parts.

The company offers Britain's only independent gamma radiation processing service, by which it sterilises medical, pharmaceutical and animal food products. The catalyst for its creation was Thompson Clive & Partners, the London venture capital group. Just over two years ago it put together a pair of independent companies, since when Isotron has received a warm welcome on the full stock market and is now valued at £27m—more than seven times its worth at the time of the merger.

Its growth since the merger also provides an example of a small company that has learned to control expansion by making its management more structured and specialised.

With turnover running at £2.7m in the year to last June and around 60 staff on three sites, Isotron does not look on the face of it to be an excessively unwieldy business. Yet it has unusual features, like for instance the need to spend at least £400,000 annually on making up for the decay of its main raw material, the radioisotope cobalt 60.

Profit margins are huge. Last year's EBITDA pre-tax surplus represents a 42 per cent return on turnover, but Isotron is in such a capital intensive business (it would cost £4m to replace the cobalt now sitting in its plants) that return on capital employed at replacement cost is a humdrum 10 per cent.

Gamma radiation has been used in Britain since the 1960s to sterilise medical devices and more recently to kill bugs in animal foods and cosmetics and to change the properties of plastics. The Government is expected shortly to release a report on the possibilities of irradiating food for human consumption.

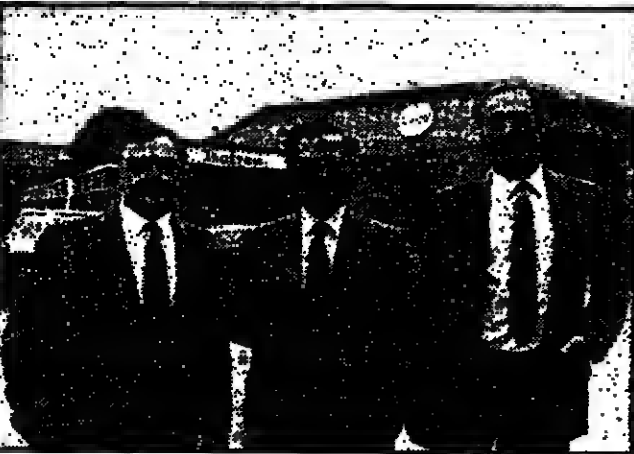
One half of the two constituents of Isotron was formed by John Grant and Frank Ley, now the company's managing and technical directors respectively. They met in the 1960s as senior members of the UK Atomic Energy Authority team assigned to look for commercial uses for radioisotopes. The project gave the men, now in their late 50s, an ideal chance to turn their research ideas into a small business, but they were unable to attract venture capital.

Eventually, the then LRC International (now London International Group) set them up as Irradiate Products (IPL) in 1970. LRC was their prime customer, chiefly for the sterilising of surgical gloves, a position it retains in the enlarged Isotron, where it accounts for

## Venture capital

### Catalyst for a quantum leap

Will Dawkins on the creation of Isotron



1 to r: Frank Ley, John Grant and Terry Summers: creating greater efficiency

16 per cent of turnover.

The other—smaller—part of the merger comes by courtesy of Terry Summers, 53, who in 1970 took charge of an independent plant, Gamma Radiation Services (GRS), after helping to develop one in-house for Gillette Surgical. After changing hands several times GRS ended up almost entirely owned by Thompson Clive.

Three years ago, GRS was beginning to see itself arriving at the limits of physical capacity at its Reading plant. New plants do not come cheap; Isotron is spending £2.4m over the next three years on a new factory in the Midlands. GRS, however, was too small to raise cash via Isotron and Thompson Clive felt that an injection of venture capital would only defer the problem of where to go next.

Summers mentioned the idea of a merger to Ley over a steak one lunchtime at a Ritz Inn outside Swindon and found that his opposite number at IPL was just as keen. Recalls Grant: "We were looking to expand into new areas and LRC did not see us, as service business, fitting into their corporate plan."

The main sense behind the merger was that GRS and IPL ran technically complementary plants. Irradiation plants work simply by passing the product

to be treated on a conveyor belt past a frame carrying tubes of cobalt 60, the whole thing being enclosed in six feet of concrete. GRS was equipped to make highly efficient use of cobalt 60 for a limited range of small products, while IPL could irradiate almost anything but less efficiently.

"By transferring products to the machines most efficient at processing them, we could do more work with less cobalt," explains Grant. With the cobalt at one plant alone decaying continuously at a rate that would cost £54 per hour to replace, efficient capacity utilisation is clearly important.

The logic impressed Thompson Clive so much that it stumped up £2.5m to buy IPL (an earnings multiple in the high teens) from LRC and merged the two small companies in December 1983. "They were the catalyst," says Grant. "I am quite sure that LRC would not have bought GRS and merged it with IPL. And we would have found it too time consuming to do a management buy-out and raise money for the purchase ourselves."

The three executive directors put up about £10,000 each for a stake of 10 per cent of the equity between them. Like many small fast growing companies, Isotron had to face the challenge of juggling its

management to cope with its new size. Directors who had until recently performed general tasks took on more specific jobs—changes which have taken place with apparently harmonious consent.

Summers, for instance, moved from his post as managing director of GRS to being sales and operations director of the new group. IPL had depended on LRC's custom so heavily that it was short of the selling skills which Summers had picked up running an independent business.

Summers admits: "It was very difficult to let go of the reins and operations director of the new company go to somebody else. I had done absolutely everything for GRS right from the start."

But in some ways, his job now is the most important. Isotron is peculiarly sensitive to fluctuations in sales volumes because almost all of its running costs are fixed—at £2.1m last year. That is why last year's £530,000 sales increase reaches the bottom line as a £427,000 rise in taxable profits. The concern of that is that if Summers allowed sales to fall, low costs, losses would mount with equally dramatic speed, unless Isotron took drastic action to reduce its breakeven point.

Another key move was the promotion of David Fletcher, 46, from manager of IPL's plant in Bradford to become overall manager of all three sites. Grant explains: "We needed somebody midway between the shopfloor and the top to give us more time to navigate rather than just steering policy decisions."

With the new management structure and operating efficiencies in place, the merged companies saw the 12 to 20 per cent growth rate they had separately experienced in recent years climb to a 53 per cent advance in operating profits in 1984-85. Further good progress is expected when Isotron unveils its interim figures a fortnight tomorrow.

The biggest source of organic growth has been an increasing tendency by hospitals to use pre-sterilised disposable medical kits rather than repeatedly sterilising their own devices with heat—a less safe and more expensive process, says Summers.

The merger has created a small company with a dominant position in its industry. Isotron's only competition comes from the in-house plants run by large medical equipment suppliers like Gillette or Sabre as Gillette Surgical has been renamed. Other sterilising methods—like ethylene oxide gas—overlaid Isotron's market, but do not compete directly.

## Fighting red tape

### Anti-bureaucracy unit exerts force

Will Dawkins reports on the effectiveness of UK Government deregulation efforts

LORD YOUNG, Britain's Employment Secretary, set his Enterprise and Deregulation Unit some praiseworthy but ambitious tasks when he published his White Paper on cutting business red tape last summer.

It is only now becoming apparent how the unit is going about turning itself into what the White Paper calls a task force with "real teeth" so that it can gnaw away at some of the less necessary bits of official bureaucracy which the Government fears is hampering small business's ability to grow and create jobs.

The unit has come a long way from its establishment under the wing of the Cabinet Office nearly 18 months ago, when it was resented by several Whitehall departments as a rogues' gallery and irritating ginger group. Now, following its move with Lord Young to the Employment Department—where the unit remains as independent as ever, emphasising officials—this band of 13 anti-bureaucratic buccanniers has established itself as an effective force.

"We have already noticed that some departments have shifted their ideas before coming to us. Ministers are now realising that deregulation is an important plank of government policy," says Paul Twyman, the unit's 42-year-old director.

This can only be good news for small businessmen, even if evidence of the unit's crusading efforts is at best piecemeal and at worst invisible because it is hard to measure precisely how

many unnecessary regulations it strangles before birth. "There is no one thing that will change the environment for enterprise," says Twyman. "It's the continual dripping of water on a stone that wears out the small businessman."

He says the unit has sipped around a dozen emergent regulations in the bud, but emphasises that the unit's real task is not to fight departments' policies wholesale but to ensure that they take effect with minimal extra cost to business.

The unit, for instance, claims part of the credit for diluting proposals for former Transport Minister Lynda Chalker that all garages should adhere to tougher vehicle testing requirements, thereby forcing the smaller operators to make expensive building alterations. Those rules now only apply to new garages.

The mechanism by which the unit carries out its job of scrutinising new and existing regulations is only now receiving its final touches. Kenneth Clarke, the Paymaster-General, who leads discussions on the unit with other ministers, has persuaded nearly all departments to establish their own one- or two-man deregulation units. These inform the central unit of any new regulations being devised by individual departments and act as general contact points. The exception is the Home Office—evidence that the unit has not yet won as much acceptance in Whitehall as it would like.

Twyman has been working since November on what he calls "a concordat" with de-

partments, whereby the unit is automatically informed of all regulatory proposals in pipelines for the coming six months, and handed drafts of all regulations in their formative stages.

As foreshadowed in last summer's White Paper, lifting the Burden, the unit is to ask each department to submit a two-page assessment of the costs that each new regulation will impose on businesses.

This idea is inspired by the analyses of the cost of complying with individual regulations carried out by the US Office of Management and Budget. However, Twyman is anxious to avoid getting as bureaucratic as some of his transatlantic counterparts. "In the US the compliance cost analysis of a single regulation can be two inches thick. We don't want to do that here," says Twyman, who is as concerned about cutting costs in the civil service as in private enterprise.

Accountants Coopers and Lybrand have been contracted to make dummy analyses of half a dozen existing regulations to act as guides to departments on how their own assessments should be carried out. The final weapon in the unit's armoury is to be a 10-strong independent advisory panel of private sector executives, consultants and accountants who will meet monthly to comment on specific proposals, new regulations and to discuss the unit's strategy. Invitations were sent out last month to possible panel members.

"We have tried to avoid the great and the good syndrome

when choosing the panel. We want some real live businessmen who were suffering every day from regulations," says Twyman, who unusually for a civil servant, has experience of business life as a non-executive director of Anglia Building Society.

One of the unit's greatest challenges has been the diplomatic one of attempting to strike a balance between being uncompromising in its anti-red tape crusade and keeping the consent of the rest of the Civil Service. Twyman feels that his job would be easier in this respect if the principles for which the unit works got more support from the small business community.

"Business does find it difficult in getting the act together to give us its views," he observes—though Twyman adds hastily that this could well be that many managers find their hands too full coping with red tape to think about lobbying.

However, he points out: "You can't just leave it up to us. Businessmen have to get the message across that deregulation is important." The final official assessment of the unit's progress will come in another White Paper on administrative burdens, due out in the spring. Twyman fears that it will come out unconvincingly close to the May 10 deadline by which computer users with personal data on file must apply for registration under the Data Protection Act; one business burden which was devised too early to feel the teeth of Lord Young's task force.

## In brief . . .

Humorous explanation of how factoring can improve cash flow is available on video from International Factors of Brighton.

The film, entitled *Deciding Factors*, stars Miranda Richardson, Richard Griffiths and Richard Warwick. It shows how a high tech, no-nonsense business pulls itself back from the brink of financial disaster by raising finance on its uncollected invoices. It can be borrowed free from International Factors' marketing department. Severn House, Queens Road, Brighton BN1 3WZ.

**BUSINESS in the Community (BIC)** has published a manual for enterprise agency staff entitled *Guidelines for Youth Enterprise*.

Written by David Grayson, co-founder of the Newcastle-based enterprise agency, Project North East, it contains advice on counselling techniques such as how to bring budding businessmen's sometimes fuzzy ideas down to earth without alienating them. Details of sources of finance for young entrepreneurs, potential problems and useful names and addresses are also included.

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Tuesday February 11 1986

## Moscow tests the West

THE Soviet Union continues to hold the centre stage in the propaganda debate on arms control. Barely three weeks after Mr Mikhail Gorbachev's sweeping proposals for a world-wide nuclear disarmament by the year 2000, Moscow appears to be offering an agreement on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) in Europe, which would be quite separate from the negotiations on strategic and space weapons. Insofar as these initiatives may indicate an untraditional flexibility in Moscow, they should be welcomed and carefully scrutinised by the West for whatever opportunities they may offer for progress in arms control. On the other hand, the Soviet position has clearly been devised to search out any possible rifts within the Atlantic Alliance: between Europe and the US, and between the nuclear and the non-nuclear allies in Europe.

For this reason, intra-Alliance consultations will be even more important this time round than they were during the abortive Euro-missile negotiations which collapsed in 1983. The US Administration is taking detailed soundings from western Europe and the Far East, soon after they are completed, the US is expected to make a detailed response in Geneva.

### Counter-proposal

As publicised, the Soviet proposal for a separate INF agreement has two major components: the US and the Soviet Union would eliminate all their Euro-missiles in Europe, but the Soviet Union would not eliminate its mobile SS 20s in Asia, and Britain would not eliminate its nuclear forces, while the US would agree not to transfer any missiles to its allies.

Advance indications suggest that Washington, subject to current soundings with its allies, is preparing to make a generally positive counter-proposal to the offer of a separate INF agreement: the elimination of all Euro-missiles in Europe, plus a 50 per cent cut in the Soviet SS 20s in Asia. There would be no question of the US undertaking any commitments as to the British and French forces.

Such a counter-proposal might satisfy some of President Reagan's political imperatives, but could prove divisive in Europe. A separate INF agreement would allow the administration to claim real progress

in arms control, while postponing the fateful day when it might have to choose whether to trade restrictions on its Star Wars programme in exchange for deep cuts in long-range strategic missiles, and the elimination of all INF weapons in Europe would correspond, at least in declaratory terms, to the original US offer of a Zero-Option.

### Modernisation plans

But the most awkward potential dilemma concerns Britain and France. London and Paris have long been clear that they would offer no constraints on their nuclear forces until the superpowers agreed deep cuts in their strategic nuclear forces and renounced any build-up of anti-missile defences. In addition, the French demand equality of conventional forces in Europe and the elimination of chemical weapons.

The logic of this position is that the British and French contribution to the Geneva negotiations would come right at the end of the process. But the logic of the Soviet position is to drag Britain and France into a much earlier phase of the negotiations, by trying once again to redefine their national deterrents as INF systems.

There is no chance that France, or the present British Government, would accept proposals which compelled them to renounce their modernisation plans (in Britain's case, the purchase of Trident from the US). But the two governments could be in difficulty if they can be represented by Moscow as the only obstacle to an agreement eliminating Euro-missiles. This difficulty is not yet immediate. European public opinion, assuaged by the mere fact of negotiations, seems so far unexcited by Soviet manoeuvres. But the difficulty could become more intense if President Reagan decides he needs a further, and unnecessary, summit with Mr Gorbachev later this year.

## Building society conversion job

THE TREASURY'S proposals for allowing building societies to convert to companies show all the symptoms of an over-reaction. The original 1984 Green Paper on the reform of building societies adopted a laissez faire stance. It suggested that, for a building society to become a company, a simple procedure should be followed to seek the approval of members, who would be allocated the shares in the new company, free of charge.

However, in the weeks before the publication of the Building Societies Bill in December, converting to company status suddenly became a topic of interest. Abbey National and other large societies said they might wish to escape the restrictions on their activities as building societies envisaged in the bill.

The realisation grew that the green paper procedure could give building society investors large windfall profits and lead to abuse. On the slightest rumour of a planned conversion, investors would switch large sums of money between societies creating liquidity crises. This was the experience of the US savings and loan bodies before the conversion process there was regulated in 1976.

The Treasury responded by publishing a consultative document on the conversion process at the same time as the bill. This will lead, it is hoped, to amendments being introduced to the bill, now passing its committee stage, over the next few weeks.

The consultative document has proposed restrictions on the conversion process which go well beyond removing the scope for abuse.

### Reasonable compromise

The underlying problem is the ownership of the 550 of building society reserves. The original green paper proposal said in effect that the reserves should belong to all the investors at the time the society converts. They would thus receive a gift of assets that should in theory belong to all those investors and borrowers who have contributed to the mutual organisation's accumulated surpluses throughout its history. The consultative document proposes a reasonable compromise

between the theory and the practicalities. Only investors of two years standing before the conversion who remained as investors for two years after would be entitled to the benefits of ownership.

Even then they would in effect be able to pocket only a small proportion of the value of the building society's reserves. The rest would belong to the society itself, an unsatisfactory solution as the Trustee Savings Bank case illustrates. As a result, the converting society would be able to raise capital by issuing shares, but at the point that its stock market value falls well below its net asset value. This is hardly a formula to promote the efficient allocation of the nation's capital.

As a further, and unnecessary, safeguard, the Treasury proposes that at least 20 per cent of all those entitled to vote must approve the conversion. Large building societies are lucky if they get a turnout as high as 10 per cent even for merger proposals attracting extensive publicity.

### Substantial discounts

In the case of a society converting as a prelude to its acquisition by, say, a clearing bank or foreign bank that wishes to build up its retail network, the restrictions proposed are so onerous as to be prohibitive. In particular, 50 per cent of all investors would have to approve. The consequence of this requirement will be to impede artificially the rationalisation of the retail financial services sector.

The Government's concern should be to prevent outsiders from rushing in to acquire building societies at substantial discounts. But if the acquirers are forced to pay more building society investors will receive more, which will make it more tempting for them to agree to a conversion and takeover.

WITH the same power at his elbow and doing the same job as his continental counterpart, a British car assembly worker produces only half as much output per shift. It is not too late to correct these weaknesses. That was the challenge thrown down to Britain's motor industry in 1975 by the Central Policy Review Staff, the Government think tank.

Ford of Britain, which has just bought its way out of a threatened strike by its 37,000 car workers over pay and productivity with a deal worth up to 18 per cent over two years, complains that output per employee in Britain is less than two thirds that of its factories in West Germany. The company wants flexibility in the use of labour, an end to demarcation disputes and greater responsibility from workers in ensuring quality.

It is too harsh, however, to say that nothing has changed. Austin Rover, for example, has just completed an almost strike-free year and Jaguar claims to have doubled productivity inside five years.

Mr Harold Musgrave, chairman of Austin Rover, claims productivity, at 14 cars per man per year is already up to the best in Europe. Now a new initiative is being launched to involve the workforce with the aim of lifting productivity to Japanese levels.

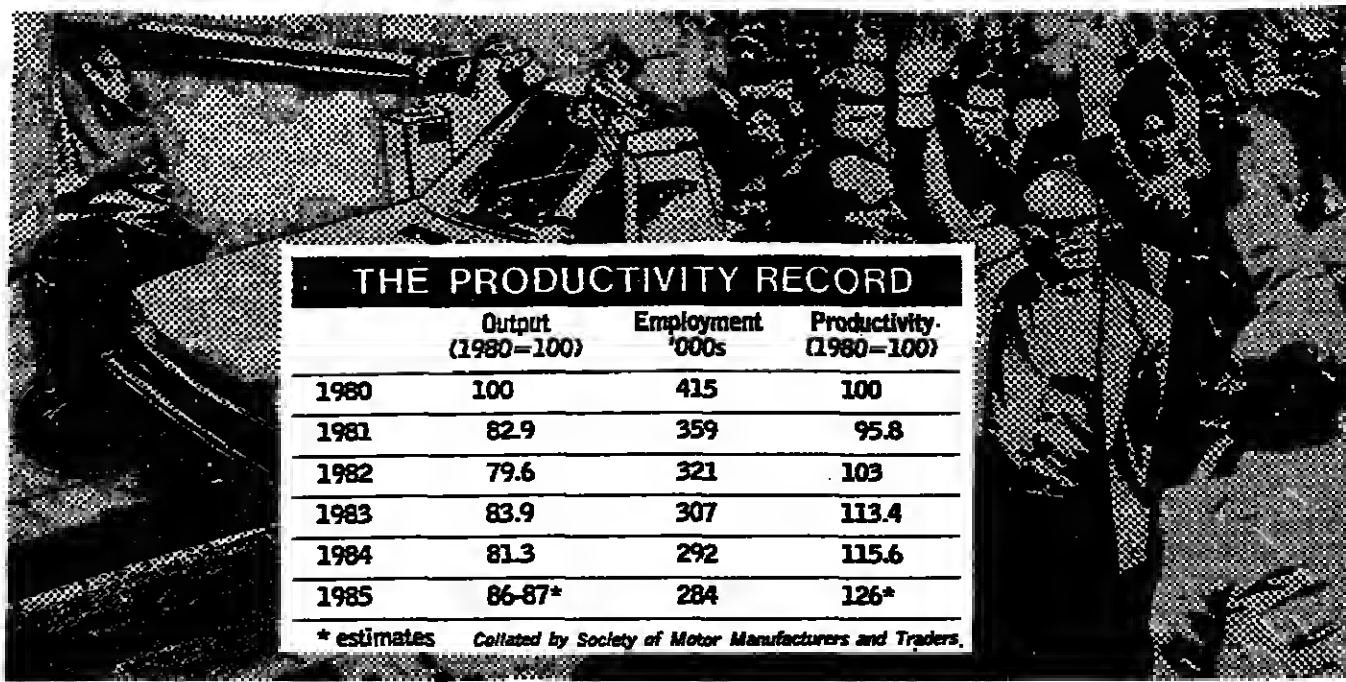
Mr John Egan, chairman of Jaguar, who has led a turnaround of the Coventry-based quality car company, insists the company is on a par with BMW and the European competition. Similar claims come from Vauxhall, the UK subsidiary of General Motors, and from Peugeot Talbot, the UK arm of the French multinational. Mr Geoffrey Whalen, Peugeot's UK managing director, maintains that the good practices at its assembly plant in Coventry — the city once notorious for its militant car workers — are being used as an example for the company's French factories.

The question then arises whether change has occurred, but whether it has occurred on the necessary scale. The Think Tank report could hardly have been more damning. It complained of over-managing, a slow pace and ruinous attitudes by both management and workers. It identified four key reasons for poor labour relations: lack of confidence in long-term prospects; a long history of conflict; lack of trust; poor communications and recent changes in payment schemes.

What progress has been achieved in these areas? ● Confidence: Here, perhaps, the Think Tank simply got it wrong, arguing that "stop-go" economic policy in the 1970s were damaging to the chances of modernising work practices. In fact, the very insecurity of job prospects in recent years has been critical in underpinning opposition to new work practices. The hemorrhage of jobs from car assembly and related component supply — down from 467,000 in 1975 to 284,000 last year — has created a new environment. EU's volume car operation has shrunk from 120,000 manual workers to 26,000. Chrysler, acquired by Peugeot of France, for a nominal £1 in 1979, has dwindled from more than 30,000 to little more than 5,000.

The new attitude is illustrated clearly by the man who headed the union side of the current Ford negotiations, Mr Mick Murphy. National Auto-

## LABOUR RELATIONS IN BRITAIN'S MOTOR INDUSTRY



Philip Thompson

## The massive leap that may not be big enough

By Arthur Smith, Helen Hague and David Thomas

motive Secretary for the Transport Workers and a convenor at Ford's Dagenham plant for 16 years, he says: "There is no question at all of the need for change. The reality of what has to happen to make Ford competitive in order to attract continued new investment will have to be thrust out at plant level with the shop stewards. Nobody likes change and there are bound to be problems, but they will not be insuperable."

● Conflict: The Think Tank argued that the long history of disputes caused a serious lack of trust between the two sides of the industry. It pointed to the inability of shop stewards to uphold agreements, citing in particular problems caused by the rapid turnover of plant management at BL.

It was at BL, under the chairmanship of Sir Michael Edwards, that the lead was given in breaking the grip of the shop stewards and asserting management's right to manage. The pyramid of power, by which management tended to pass instructions to the shopfloor through the trade union hierarchy began to crumble with the dismissal in late 1979 of Dave "Red Robin" Robinson, the Communist convenor at Longbridge.

The shop steward movement was thrown into a turmoil from which it has never recovered by a series of reverses at the hands of the workforce. In April, 1980 BL cars ended union opposition to impose unilaterally "the blue newspaper", radical new terms of employment — similar to Ford's more recent proposals. A similar "shop floor revolution" is reported at Peugeot-Talbot, at Jaguar, Vauxhall and Ford.

● Communications: The Think Tank complained that, in many cases, managers only talked to workers through the trade unions and shop stewards. "Management is unable to communicate clearly and convincingly to its workforce the true competitive state of the British industry."

Such a statement is no longer



true. At Jaguar, Peugeot and Austin Rover the trucks are stopped regularly for managers to hold detailed discussions direct with the workforce on plant performance, production and quality.

● Pay Systems: The Think Tank drew attention to the problems caused by the then BL and Chrysler falling into line with Vauxhall and Ford by introducing measured day work. In theory, the anarchy of piecework was replaced by a system where effort was evaluated scientifically by industrial engineers — "the time-and-motion men" — with management ensuring allotted tasks were carried out.

In practice, the foreman proved no replacement for the powerful shop stewards. Mr Bill Lapworth, a senior Midlands official of the Transport Workers, says: "Under piecework there was no problem of flexibility. Stewards would pull in workers from anywhere to make sure the job was done."

The argument thus switched from pay to manning levels. Mr Mike Judge, personnel director at Peugeot Talbot, says: "For 10 years under pure measured day work we negotiated in the inefficiencies which it has taken us the past five years to get rid of."

The method chosen by Peugeot, Jaguar and Austin Rover to smooth the path for the much-needed productivity changes was self-financing incentive schemes. This was designed to relate earnings to effort as under the old piecework system. It offers bonus earnings worth around 20 per cent on top of the normal standard wage.

Mr Barry Tyson, a senior steward and Jaguar worker of 25 years, says: "Obviously we have to work a damn sight harder than before, but it is no worse than under the old piecework system."

Vauxhall, which also operates a performance-related incentive scheme yielding up to about £15 a week, offered additional off payments in its 1984 pay deal to encourage greater mobility of labour and flexibility between trades.

Vauxhall says it is satisfied with the new system. Workers now inspect and correct their own work. Mobility extends to manning tracks in the event of "wildcat" strikes agreed by both unions and management to have been unconstituted.

Similarly, at Austin Rover, it is claimed that objectives for movement of labour and flexibility between skills have largely been achieved. Workers move freely between operations without argument.

Ford has been making changes in the past few years but is behind its competitors, according to union officials. The company also differs from its rivals in spurning performance-related incentive schemes. The management philosophy is clear: "We operate measured day work. Our general experience is that bonus schemes are impossible to administer and lead to disruption rather than acting as an incentive."

Ford, like Vauxhall, is offering a special payment — 4 per cent on basic pay — in order to buy out restrictions on productivity. While clinging rigidly to the philosophy that it is management's role to ensure workers give maximum effort, Ford is shifting ground dramatically to the modern practice that more responsibility should be given to employees to improve quality.

Ford wants operators to undertake new tasks such as finding and repairing minor machinery defects, fetching materials, cleaning machinery and inspecting for quality. Pressure for such change comes from the example of the Japanese-style of management, introduction of sophisticated new machinery with in-built quality checks, and the sheer drive to be competitive.

The trend towards "inspect and correct" now apparent across the UK industry is well illustrated at Peugeot Talbot where patrolling inspectors have been phased out. The focus is placed on the operative

to assess his own quality. The two-tier management structure has been replaced with a supervisor overseeing groups of around 25. The company says: "Workers wanted the foreman off their backs and to be trusted to get on with the job themselves."

Similarly, at Austin Rover, a zone system of management has been introduced with a manager — a mini managing director — taking full responsibility for groups of around 25 workers. The company, in a strategy aimed at closing the productivity gap with Japan, plans to create "zone circles", an advanced form of quality circles in which shopfloor volunteers will be sought to join discussions on all production matters. So how far have these changes taken the industry?

A broad indication of productivity trends is given by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders which suggests there has been a 25 per cent improvement in production across the whole motor industry since 1980. Admittedly the definitions are arbitrary at the edges with some parts of the components sector excluded, however, is no better than the overall performance by manufacturing industry in the period. Mr Michael Cross of the Technical Change Centre, a leading researcher into demarcation in industry, says that car assembly has been good by the standards of most engineering, but poor against process industries such as chemicals and oil refining.

William Brown, Professor of industrial relations at Cambridge, however, says it is important not to underestimate the scale of progress: "The next small step, but for an industry with such a history of problems it is a massive leap."

The problem is that improvements in man management may not be enough. The next stage of productivity seems likely to depend upon the linked issues of new investment and sales volume.

At Jaguar, for example, productivity improvements have stemmed from better management of conventional facilities — the next leap in efficiency is projected to come from the introduction of new equipment. Automated manufacturing systems that will start to come on stream with production later this year of the new model, the XJ40, are planned to raise output from 42,000 cars this year to around 60,000 by the end of the decade. The labour force will be held steady at the present 10,500 as the company takes advantage of projected expanding markets.

For Austin Rover, already seeing the benefits of new technology, sales volumes will be crucial. Productivity jumped in the first half of last year when the company's new production line, nearly 80,000 to 257,000, but failure to achieve a corresponding breakthrough in sales led to extensive lay-offs and a cut in vehicle output.

Vauxhall's productivity meanwhile has been helped by raising UK sales. But as some union officials have recognised at Ford, workers have to deliver the required efficiency if they are to continue to attract new investment.

Professor Brown sums up the new attitude to change: "I never cease to be amazed by reports from the trade unions of workers voting to stand on their heads — if only it will bring the prospect of job security."

### A better fit for Coats

David Alliance, Vantona Vityella's chief executive, confessed yesterday that his takeover bid for Coats Patons had almost been stillborn.

Over lunch with James McAdam, Coats's Scottish managing director, at the end of last year, each misread the other's signals. "I asked David what he thought of Total," McAdam said. "He replied 'it's not for us, the fit is not right. I thought he was saying Coats was not a good fit either'."

As a result, Coats looked around and came up a fortnight ago with an all-Scottish merger with Dawson International, the Fringe sweaters group.

A rather embarrassed McAdam had to admit yesterday that the company had pulled out of that deal and was now backing a slightly higher offer from Vantona. "But price did not really enter into it," he said. "You have to look at the whole package."

"Dawson was very strong on brand names but Vantona is even better. It has a much wider range of brand names and the synergy is good."

Alliance was bubbling yesterday — but the Dawson bid nearly caught him napping. "We thought we would announce our figures and then give it a week or two before making a move for Coats. We had to move pretty fast when we saw what Dawson was doing."

### Men and Matters

Up in Kinross, meanwhile, a mortified Ronald Miller, chairman of the abandoned union, Dawson, was bemoaning his fate.

Fourteen days ago, he and McAdam had been chummy in the virtues of an all-Scottish Dawson Coats Patons group. Coats's about-turn was "astounding," he said. Pointing to the cash difference between the Vantona and Dawson bids, he added: "Coats's board has changed its mind for Isp. I could not have done it."

### Manly pursuit

The Canadians are finding that while good intentions about not offending any conceivable minority grouping sound fine and dandy they can prove difficult to put into practice.

A new and impressive museum is being built across the Ottawa river from Parliament Hill and is to open in July 1988. From the beginning the project has been given a working title: the National Museum of Man.

But the very idea of calling it anything like that in modern non-sexist Canada has caused consternation, both in and out of parliament.

A national search for a name acceptable to all Canadians which will yet still describe the museum's proper function is now under way.

The museum authorities have come up with 50 names including — the Museum of Man and Woman, the Museum of Mankind, and the Museum of People. More original — certainly brighter — are some of the ideas from the public, which has written in with nearly 2,000 ideas.

Proposals include the Museum of Herstory and the Museum of Men, Women and Gays, the Museum



of Man and his Wife, and the National Museum of Oghs.

In spite of all this help the museum remains nameless. The communications minister Marcel Masse has now set up a special committee to decide on a non-sexist name.

### Green pastures

Kenneth Green is one of those Americans who clearly enjoys living in London. After six years in the capital with Bank of America International, he is going native by transferring to the planned Barclays de Zoete Wedd investment banking unit being planned by Barclays Bank ahead of the "big bang" later this year.

At Barclays de Zoete, Green, 42, will be responsible for all the group's capital market business out of London, Hong Kong, Tokyo and New York. Insiders say the appointment

means that he will have a key role in developing Barclays' capital market strategy as the City revolution gathers force.

The move is remarkable for a lack of the acrobatics and recrimination that these days often surrounds City personnel moves. Bank of America International quickly replaced Green as managing director yesterday with Gerald Doherty, a forceful Irishman, who has been in charge of its marketing, business origination and Eurozone facilities.

At the same time, it is strengthening its management structure with the appointment of four new deputy managing directors from in-house. They are Stephen Clasper, Paul Gold, Anthony Camper and Philip Metcalf.

### Work ethics

Judging from the opening part of his speech Sir John Harvey-Jones, chairman of ICI, was a bit bemused when asked by the Royal Society of Arts to talk about the ethics of manufacturing industry.

Ethics are ethics, after all, at any level of society, he said, and that didn't mean "money for old rope, or money on false pretences," but "the ethics of doing a good job and doing what we are paid to do properly and professionally."

Characteristically he also managed a few plain-speaking swipes at a few people whose views he doesn't share, such as the anti-apocalyptic and heribridic brigade.

He reminded his audience that even now 90 per cent of the world's population spends 90 per cent of its time doing what it was doing back in the Middle Ages — working.

And for those who in his view take away the respect that all people deserve by talking about "human resources" or the "labour market" Sir John concluded dismissively: "Such crudity of thought and distant intellectualism should have no part in our vocabulary."

Observer

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## Gresham Trust



## Letters to the Editor

## Plenty of traditionally strong European industries

From Mr S. Telegdy

Sir—The heading of Sir Michael Butler's article "How Europe can fight the multi-nationals" (February 5) was a warning signal to anyone who may have expected a less polemical plea for government support of European co-operative research from the former UK representative to the European Community.

Certainly, your transatlantic readership will be confused. Are they to fight for it in the US, Volkswagen in Brazil

or Ciba-Geigy in Japan? Or with the emotive multinational label, which have been the catalysts of high technology transfer to Europe? Yet this sort of politicised, one-sided approach with its divisive rhetoric may still serve a good purpose: that of finding the right direction for sponsored industrial research and development. There are many who seriously question the soundness of targeting government or EEC funds towards technology areas, which are

weak in Europe. The need to reinvent the wheel of electronics, telecommunications etc is only felt by those to whom self-reliance is a political, not an economic maxim. Building on strengths has always been the soundest industrial strategy. There are plenty of traditionally strong European industries, whose products compare favourably with the best in the world as testified by the success of numerous European—multinational—companies in the US and Japan. Why not strengthen them,

rather than pour money into uncompetitive industries? The prospect of expanding government funds on glamorous dreams strengthens my belief that while industry left to its own devices may not be infallible, it will do better than under the influence of governmental interference. If only one could show us how to fight the meddling politicians. Stephen L. Telegdy, B-1150 Brussels, Ave. des Eperviers, 72 Belgium.

## Conscientious teachers

Sir—I was at a London tube station recently and observed a group of school children and two teachers who were accompanying them. They were judging from the remarks of the children, going to one of the museums in Kensington.

The young man was wearing a pair of old boots, partially laced and badly in need of some black polish; his trousers of the trendy camouflage type, seemed to have been slept in for the past year or two. He wore an old bottle-green top with no sign of a shirt beneath, had an unkempt beard and most strange, and it was all crowned by a mass of uncombed hair. The young woman had a punk hairstyle atrocious make-up and a crumpled denim blouse and trousers. She was also wearing a pair of dirty-white pinstripes.

Both teachers were leaning against the wall, each with a cigarette hanging from their lips. Shortly afterwards they smiled gently at the male teacher with his hands in his pockets, shoulders bent, still puffing away at his cigarette.

These two teachers may not be typical of teachers in general, but they are undoubtedly included in Mr Fred Jarvis's claim that his means are "professional". They typify, in my opinion, what is wrong and bad in the teaching profession today. How on earth can they be responsible for the education of the nation's children when they are incapable of setting a good example to the children entrusted to them, in manners, deport-

ment and dress? I find it astonishing that they have so little pride in their own person and personal behavior. God knows what sort of people these children will become when their mentors are such bad examples.

That these "professional" teachers accept their salaries even though they have not worked for all of it, and treat striking and classroom disruption as the normal way of negotiating grievances simply adds to the profound disgust parents must have in leaving their children in their hands.

It is time Mr Jarvis explained to the parents and the public at large just why he is unwilling to negotiate terms and conditions of employment for his members. Everybody else in Britain is required by law to have a detailed contract of employment—why not the teachers? Are they afraid they'll have to do some real teaching?

These comments are unfair and know it. There are many good and conscientious teachers who have to suffer because of the lack of professionalism in others. They have the solution in their own hands—they should vote (with their feet) to accept Sir Keith Joseph's offer of more money for good teaching and less for bad teaching. Strangely enough other professions work on this basis!

C. R. Miller, Maresfield Road, 22, 4055 Korscheneibach 2, West Germany

## MFA and consumer choice

From the Chairman, Consumers' Association

Sir—Your leader (January 30) is both timely and to the point. We have argued for many years that the Multi-Fibre Arrangement deserves progressive and effective adjustment given the well-documented costs it imposes on the economy in general and consumers in particular. Now is the time for that to happen, when we have a strong lobby from developing countries, the forthcoming Gatt round and, not least, a relatively healthy West European textile industry.

The share your dismay that the European Community has so far failed to grasp the nettle by agreeing on a firm plan to phase out the MFA.

It simply won't do to play the usual European game of splitting the difference between protection and liberalisation. Nor will it do just to think with politically sensitive but minor features of the arrangement, such as its unfair treatment of the poorest countries and of children's clothing, welcome though reforms would be. The Community's trade ministers need to seize on the wholesale phasing out of the MFA as an urgent political priority in the interests both of a successful Gatt round and of the 300m European consumers who always pick up the bill for protectionism.

Rachel Waterhouse, 14, Buckingham Street, WC2.

## Convertibility of currency

From Dr P. Collins

Sir—Professor Pearce (January 30) is correct in pointing out the merits of guaranteeing currency convertibility as a means of preventing inflation which has been the norm throughout the period during which paper money has been in use. Unfortunately it is not possible, as he proposes, to define the unit of money in terms of a basket of commodities without causing unacceptable distortions in the market. Such a system would be simple to implement, and it would avoid the weaknesses of more complex schemes which would distort prices.

The details of this means of resuming currency convertibility were worked out in the 1940s by the Australian economist, the late Leo St. Clare Grandmont. A form of currency convertibility, Grandmont's system would have a beneficial influence on a wide range of issues, including reducing inflation, stabilising the exchange rate and the balance of payments; counteracting recession; and encouraging international trade (particularly that with developing countries). The scale of these effects would be determined by the scale on which the system was implemented by the government of any country adopting it.

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Encouraging advancement in job and social status, in personal self-interest and responsibility for decision-making, have not been high on the unions' agenda. A negative, perhaps even hostile, milieu to raising job expectations—i.e. occupational status—must dampen union members' quest for seeking more responsibility—the mainspring for entrepreneurial action. Tacit or open disapproval of such ambitions or instincts by union officials must be followed by an anaesthesia of such desires on the part of trade union members. Such "disappointments" can become hardened and such attitudes transmitted by parents to children. This is one way that disdain of enterprise has been passed from one generation to



## Top salaries review body

From the Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service

Sir—Your article "Downing Street machine minder" (February 5) could revive a myth which was given currency in an article by Samuel Brittan (August 4 1985) and which I should like to dispel.

The salary rates for senior civil servants are set by the Government in July last year were those recommended by the independent top salaries review body (TSRB). I was responsible for co-ordinating the interdepartmental process-

ing of the issue, including the preparation of options for implementing the recommendations by stages, for consideration by Ministers. I had earlier given evidence to the review body, at its request, on such matters as recruitment, wastage, motivation and morale in the civil service. But I did not make any recommendations or suggestions of any kind as to salary rates either to the review body or to Ministers. Indeed it would have been quite wrong for me to do so, given that my own salary was one of those involved. (Sir) Robert Armstrong, 70 Whitehall SW1

## Personal tax reform

From Mr C. Beattie, QC

Sir—Your article (February 3) on personal tax reform suggests that every adult, married or single, should be given the same standard tax allowance against his or her income, with no right to transfer the allowance to his or her spouse or anyone else. This is surely right, though possibly improving the proposal by phasing out personal reliefs altogether for income rising above a certain figure. You suggest, though, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might be unwilling to make this sort of change because the Conservative Party might lose the votes of those who would benefit from the change. I sincerely trust that party political considerations are not going to inhibit the Chancellor from proposing what is sensible.

During the past six years of Conservative government, Parliament has passed Finance Acts of greater length than in any comparable period in our country's history. The result is a taxing structure of such complexity as almost to defy

imagination, and this from a party that promised to simplify our taxes. Much of the trouble lies in the imposition of various taxes (now perhaps to have a poll tax added) at unduly high rates with a vast number of reliefs granted in response to the whims of the dominant and kept on foot with unending amendments.

The task which faces the Conservative Party is to get Parliament not merely to make personal reliefs fair, but also to do away with nearly all other reliefs from tax. Such a move would enable rates of tax to be reduced, and if coupled with stopping the ever-increasing spending of public money on unworthy objects, would enable the overall tax burden to be reduced, as promised by the Conservative Party. Instead of being continuously increased, as has in fact happened. Or would party political considerations inhibit any such programme? C. N. Beattie, 24 Old Buildings, Lincoln's Inn WC2

## Decaying sewer network

From the Public Services Officer, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Sir—Mr A. R. Guy (chairman of the Water Panel, January 29) refers to industry's concern about adequate investment by a privately-owned water business in flood control. Local authorities, most of who act as sewerage undertakers, are equally concerned about the nation's decaying sewer network.

In Barnsley, for instance, during the past 12 months 110 sewer collapses occurred. In addition, closed circuit TV surveys have identified many kilometers of sewers with anything from hairline cracks to signs of further imminent collapse. Even allowing for contributions from the National Coal Board where collapses can be related

directly to recent mining activity, to ensure only a barely adequate level of service requires an annual expenditure of several million pounds. Yorkshire Water Authority has done an excellent job in making the necessary funds available in extremely difficult circumstances, to keep the worst of the problems at bay.

What is worrying many local authorities, and Barnsley is not an exceptional case by any means, is what treatment we can expect from a private company in the face of what is surely the most enormous call on its resources: the attractiveness of a company as a commercial investment having to do with a problem of these dimensions must be open to doubt. P. G. Thompson, Town Hall, Barnsley.

## Metamorphosis towards market-based trade unionism

From Mr N. Storey

The metamorphosis from class-based to market-based trade unionism—as Lombard so aptly described (January 31) the new unionism—has been a long and painful process. It is a process of unrelenting entrepreneurialism among trade unionists; it can also significantly assist in the re-industrialisation of Britain.

As entrepreneurs arise largely from the ranks of immigrants, refugees and the best of all catchment areas—the working class, why is it that the working class does not turn out more of them? A possible explanation is a stifling of working class entrepreneurial instincts by the historical stance of most trade unions and their officials.

With all too visible exceptions, trade unions have discouraged their members from aspiring to supervisory or managerial positions, not to mention board appointments. "A man who has gone over to the boss class cannot be trusted anymore"—a magis-

terial Herbert Morrisonian prejudice long outdated though still lingering. But, beyond such antique illogical prejudice lies the traditional trade union machine's mission to ensure that members remain rigidly "working class."

Encouraging advancement in job and social status, in personal self-interest and responsibility for decision-making, have not been high on the unions' agenda. A negative, perhaps even hostile, milieu to raising job expectations—i.e. occupational status—must dampen union members' quest for seeking more responsibility—the mainspring for entrepreneurial action. Tacit or open disapproval of such ambitions or instincts by union officials must be followed by an anaesthesia of such desires on the part of trade union members. Such "disappointments" can become hardened and such attitudes transmitted by parents to children. This is one way that disdain of enterprise has been passed from one generation to

the next. Despite disapprovals at the workplace, the entrepreneurial propensities of the working class, i.e. trade unionists, cannot be suppressed—as revealed by the meteoric rise of the black economy. Since the recent growth in unemployment, self-employment has risen by 31 per cent. Most of these are drawn mostly from the ranks of workers and, with few exceptions, not from among PhD graduates. Freedom from external constraints to earn a living has been a liberating influence, and, from all accounts, moonlighters are highly efficient at their jobs; these are the working class entrepreneurs in embryo!

Traditional trade union attitudes to entrepreneurship, such as innovation, has, at best, been negative but, more likely, hostile. In a fast changing world of skills and jobs, such a stick-in-the-mud approach is insupportable. The days are gone when trade unions could be concerned

only with "matters that directly and immediately affect labour"—thus excluding from consideration the problems of the firm. Technical and commercial policy, sales policy, the raising of new materials, that is, the business infrastructure that sustains employment, narrow sectarian interests of any group are indefensible today—as compositors to coal miners are beginning to learn.

The success of latter-day entrepreneurship in Britain will probably help change the traditional, frozen, anti-risk posture of trade union prejudices by de-mythologising it. Progressive union officials have successfully practised entrepreneurship, thus helping Britain to regain a commercial and resilient—a precondition of re-industrialisation and a key to expanding employment! Nicholas Storey, Reform Club, Pall Mall SW1

## The Philippines election

## Marcos: the victory no one could stop

By Chris Sherwell in Manila



THREE DAYS after last Friday's badly disputed presidential election in the Philippines, the most alarming but confident prediction looks certain to come true. Mr Ferdinand Marcos, by hook or by crook, will retain power, and his challenger, Mrs Corason Aquino, will be excluded.

The cost is also much as forecast. Mr Marcos's credibility has hit an all-time low, and he faces potentially insuperable troubles. His closest friend and ally, the United States, is in an appalling dilemma. And the outlook for the Philippines is unrelieved uncertainty—the one thing the election was supposed to remove.

What no one accurately predicted were the events of Election Day itself. Nobody foresaw the shoving of the electoral rolls to enhance the effectiveness of phony votes. Nobody guessed the abuses would be so blatant. Nobody imagined the counting could be so deliberately confused.

Hundreds of thousands of people were disenfranchised last Friday. The abuses, witnessed by foreign observers as well as ordinary Filipinos, included vote-buying, switched ballot boxes and rigged election returns. This count slowly generated into farce, and by last night it was obvious that only Mr Marcos could win the official tally done by the National Assembly he controls.

At every turn Mr Marcos, ministers and the government-controlled media have thrown back criticisms made by the Opposition and the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfre), the citizens' watchdog monitoring the poll, which was supposed to conduct a parallel "quick count" with the Official Commission on Elections (Comelec) and ended up with completely different running totals.

Just as Mr Marcos sought before the election to create doubts—over whether he would really call an early election, over the date, over whether the count would allow it to go ahead and whether he might withdraw at the last minute—so all tactics during and after the election have seemed aimed at creating maximum confusion and the greatest tactical advantage.

What Mr Marcos could not have reckoned on was the outspokenness of the international observer teams which came to see the polls for themselves. Sunday, a 44-member delegation drawn from 19 nations openly accused Mr Marcos's party of cheating.

Yesterday a US Congressional team spoke of "disturbing" efforts to undermine the electoral process, and its leader, Senator Richard Lugar, said the poll was "teetering on the brink of disaster".

To some extent the chance of a spontaneous mass reaction has

Mrs Aquino is faced with the question of whether to stand by her pledge to lead daily public demonstrations against Mr Marcos. To be effective, these could not be like the outpouring of grief after the assassination of her husband, opposition leader Benigno Aquino, 21 years ago. There would have to be a deliberate challenge to the authority of Mr Marcos.

Irritated by previous talk of disturbances, Mr Marcos had warned the opposition before the election that he would meet "violence with violence." Last night's incidents could be a nasty foretaste of what is to come. Much will depend on the will of people to commit themselves to a long and potentially costly battle.

The Communist-inspired insurgents of the New People's Army seem likely to stop up their activities and certain to

looked slimmer as each day has passed, as Mr Marcos probably calculated when the counting of votes was slowed to a crawl after the election. But left-wing groups have indicated their readiness to join Mrs Aquino if she leads militant street demonstrations, and one of them plans to start its own protest today.

The role of the Roman Catholic Church will be crucial. It has the capacity to restrain people in the cause of peace or push them on in the pursuit of justice. Last year it talked of a "parliament of the streets," and if none should now confront armed police, it will be far more than that, and quite possibly contagious.

The Communist-inspired insurgents of the New People's Army seem likely to stop up their activities and certain to

acquire more recruits. Diplomats suggest that another murky group, known locally as the "Socdem's" and believed to be urban middle-class radicals, may also turn to organised violence.

The critical unknown factor is the military, headed by General Fabian Ver, the man implicated and cleared in the alleged conspiracy to murder Mrs Aquino's husband. In the event of demonstrations, it is not clear whether the 210,000-strong armed forces of the Philippines can be wholly depended upon to enforce Mr Marcos's writ.

Particular attention has focused recently on the so-called "Reform Group" of younger officers within the military, to whom Mrs Aquino indirectly appealed before the election with her promise that "overstaying" generals would be retired and "deserving" colonels and other officers would be promoted.

The US's position on such matters will be what, but its dilemma right now is that a long-time friend and ally has, in effect, stuck his tongue out at Washington.

It is not obvious what Mr Reagan can do in response. The most talked of option, a cut-off in aid, might take time to implement and could probably be managed only for about two years without jeopardising the agreement under which the US uses strategic air and naval bases in the Philippines.

Mr Marcos knows how important these bases are to the US—even Washington said they were "irreplaceable" shortly before the election. He also knows that the US cannot afford to undermine the counter-insurgency effort in the Philippines.

As for Mr Marcos, who is 63 and has held power for over 20 years, no one knows his people better. It still remains possible that the controversy over the election will disintegrate into an array of legalistic battles, Church Masses and expensive patronage. Thus, with a move towards a promised constitutional reform and a review of the bases, Mr Marcos could remain firmly in the saddle, at least for the moment.

Since it is not in Mr Marcos's character to give ground unnecessarily, however, the more plausible outcome is a groundswell of discontent and bitterness which will take Filipinos closer to their limits of tolerance and provocation. It will then take all of Mr Marcos's well-honed political instincts and scummen to manage such a delicate balance. As it will also take considerable energy, of which he has diminishing quantities, there is now a formula for trouble in the Philippines.

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## FINANCIAL TIMES

Tuesday February 11 1986



Alan Friedman in Palermo reports on high drama at the start of the 'maxi-trial'

## Italian state takes on the Mafia

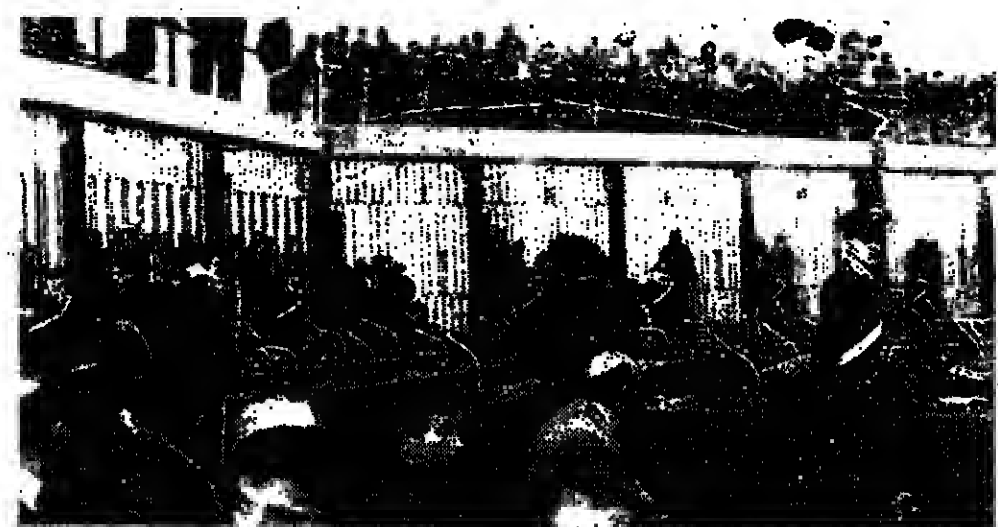
"THIS is the trial of the Mafia organisation known as 'Cosa Nostra', an extremely dangerous criminal association which, using violence and intimidation, has spread, and continues to spread, death and terror."

That is the first sentence of the 8,607-page indictment against 474 alleged Mafia members who went on trial in Palermo yesterday. The trial, the biggest and most important yet against the Mafia, opened amid high drama in a city all too familiar with the drama of frequent assassinations, the constant wall of police stunts and the sight of Carabinieri with machine guns and bullet-proof waistcoats.

The "maxi-trial", as it is being called in Italy, is more than just a legal procedure against defendants, who are alleged to include five of the 12 members of the Mafia's governing commission and many of the most ferocious killers, heroin traders and even tax collectors with close ties to leading politicians. It is the first serious trial of the Italian state against the Mafia, an organisation which does not accept the right of the state to try it.

The trial, which is expected to last up to 18 months, is being held in a specially built bunker courtroom inside a Palermo prison. The bunker cost more than £20m (\$28m) to construct and contains 250 armed guards. Outside, helicopters circle overhead, and 2,000 Carabinieri patrol. The feeling of siege is completed by the large blue armoured vehicles parked beside it.

The indictment, which fills 40 volumes (four of which number 1,000 pages and concern Mafia banking and finance), is dedicated to Judge Rocco Chinnici, the magistrate who began the investigation three years ago and who died when the Mafia bombed his car. It is packed with detail on the multi-billion dollar



The specially constructed and fortified courtroom in Palermo where 474 alleged Mafia members are on trial

heroin trade which is the Mafia's main activity. Its vertically integrated command structure, international ties and financial side.

The five magistrates who drew it up travelled the world, from Brazil and the United States to Asia and Switzerland in search of evidence. Thus, one can read about current account number 209301 at Credito Svizzero in Lugano, where from 1961 and 1963 Mr Tommaso Spadaro - who is on trial for being a leading Mafia boss and heroin trader - is alleged to have received bank transfers totalling £900m (\$1,350m) in dollars and other currencies from American associates. Mr Spadaro, in court yesterday, screamed to journalists from his iron-barred cage that "the money that this account is not mine."

Judge Giovanni Falcone, the leading investigating magistrate who

has made "the war" his life's work, says the Credito Svizzero account "is just one account among many which the Swiss supplied us with."

Dr Falcone lives an eerie existence: he is constantly escorted by 11 bodyguards in bullet-proof jackets who drive him in a motorcade of three or four police cars.

He and others are being by legal criticisms levelled against the idea of a mass trial. He reckons that, instead of using violence, the Mafia is responding by hiring the best lawyers and by using its influence with politicians and other officials to discredit and undermine the trial.

"In a city like Palermo, where you can have 300 murders a year, the judicial system is engulfed. This maxi-trial is not our choice: it is a necessity," he comments.

What kind of effect has the trial

had on the Mafia? Dr Falcone says it is "not decisive, but important." He says the Mafia is suffering financially. Indeed, one of the star defendants is Mr Pippo Calò, the organisation's alleged finance director. But the heroin trade, while damaged, is still estimated to be worth around \$100m a year to the Mafia.

Meanwhile, more than 100 of the 474 alleged Mafia members are still at large. On the eve of the trial, in fact, police found a mountain hide-out near Palermo with guns, ammunition and the word "ciao" inscribed on a piece of wood.

Mr Michele Greco, the alleged "boss of bosses," is still at large and being tried in absentia. But it is worth noting that, as recently as the spring of 1982, Mr Greco was not even listed by the authorities as a Mafioso. Instead, he was seen

walking freely up and down the halls of the Sicilian parliament, lobbying, power-broking and helping to write legislation. Now he is on the run.

One disturbing aspect not addressed in the trial is the manner in which a number of politicians from the Christian Democrat and other parties are said to have worked hand-in-glove with the Mafia.

It is widely assumed, but rarely stated in public, that the murder in 1982 of General Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa, the special anti-Mafia high commissioner, could not have been carried out without the tacit consent of senior politicians in Sicily. Anti-Mafia magistrates and politicians say in private that certain members of the Rome Government receive electoral support from Sicilian politicians tied to the organisation.

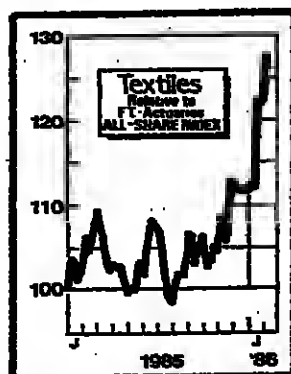
Plans are already under way, though, for a second "maxi-trial" of at least 300 more alleged Mafia members, and this second trial is supposed to touch on the issue known in Italy as the "third level" - a reference to politicians who are linked to the Mafia.

Mr Leoluca Orlando, the determined anti-Mafia mayor of Palermo who takes personal risks by cutting off city contractors who are believed to be Mafia-linked, says the trial which opened yesterday "should be viewed as one trial and not the trial."

Thus, the importance of the maxi-trial is relative. In its size, scope and detail it is without precedent. The very fact that it is being held in Palermo, the home of the Mafia, is a statement, and the stature of the defendants is genuine. But if the anti-Mafia campaign in Italy is to be serious in future, the next trial must tackle the explosive issue of the Mafia and Italian politicians.

## THE LEX COLUMN

## Turncoats at a premium



To agree one merger and jump into another is not without precedent in the UK - the Comet electrical chain flightily changed its mind overnight a couple of years back - but it is certainly out of the ordinary. Only a fortnight ago, Coats Patons' agreement with Dawson International seemed such a cosy affair that nothing short of a monopolies reference seemed likely to scupper it; synergy and Scottishness alike were supposed to recommend the match. Now the merits of a marginally higher price from Vantona, and the broader product diversity offered by the new suitor, have led the Coats board to elope.

The market looked indulgently on this change of heart; Vantona's share price stood up far better yesterday to the underwriting of a higher bid than Dawson's had under the strain of the original merger. Since it could back its request with news of good results for the year to last November, Vantona was in a strong position. Its previous merger with Nottingham Manufacturing had indeed served its turn by providing a springboard to this much larger deal; merger-accounted profits before tax are up to £22m, and the balance sheet looks the better for NM's cash.

The immediate gains for Vantona are not so much greater than for Dawson: each can use Coats' profits of advance corporation tax, to the tune of £8m or so in the first year. For Vantona that is almost enough to remove the earnings dilution that it has taken on. Thereafter, the wider spread of businesses and the way that Vantona provides a natural currency hedge for Coats will make the whole structure more stable than either of its parts - and probably stronger than the proposed Coats-Dawson grouping. Whether these advantages justify paying over 12% times earnings for Coats is less clear; but since Coats is unlikely to turn again, Vantona has probably got itself a deal.

The Swedish group has advanced the publication of its results in an effort to persuade the market that, after two years of consistent disappointment, the worst is finally behind it. Ericsson is aiming for break-even - before interest and development costs - in both its US operations and its information systems division this year. Each lost over SKr 500m at the operating level in 1985, a result which points the finger of blame fairly and squarely at US information systems. With new management in place and a savage rationalisation programme under way, those break-even targets look just about attainable.

The priority, however, must be to stem the cash outflow which has drained around SKr 5m from the group over the past three years. Ericsson is hoping for a cash neutral performance in 1986 and has backed its optimism with a maintained, if slightly covered, dividend for 1985. After four years of dramatic underperformance, the Stockholm market is at last giving Ericsson the benefit of the doubt. The share price has jumped 15 per cent in the past week alone, at SKr 281, trades on 20 times historic earnings.

It is not unusual for victors to fall to fighting among themselves and the peculiar structure of the bid for Debenhams - a purely tactical alliance - always had the potential for a Berlin-style crisis no sooner had the common enemy been humbled. Sir Terence Conran may have added a certain tone to the allied effort but his hands were left free when the untimely entry of House of Fraser was forcing Burton to deploy all its resources just to win the

day. His various aggressive acts in other theatres, ranging from the merger with BHS to certain wounding remarks about Burton in last week's *Drapers Record*, have merely strengthened his position. It now appears that the protocols between Burton and Habitat-Moquette have about as much substance as a pencil drawing of a Galleria. The only apparently binding agreement, which covers the Habitat option over 20 per cent of Debenhams equity by next December, may have been ruled out by the BHS merger. But it is hard to see Habitat actually wanting to hand over some £100m to help a competitor fund its capital expenditure. More probably, Habitat is only keeping the issue alive for the leverage needed to prise out some fairly selective use of the footage option.

Burton may not lose much sleep about a promise to Debenhams shareholders in which Habitat very much figured; but it cannot start committing space to Habitat before it knows what Storehouse is going to offer. But then it cannot afford to allow a long-drawn-out tussle over the options or design consultancy to provide Storehouse with leisure to close a strategic gap.

## Investment banks

Wall Street investment banks know a good thing when they see one, and it is surely no coincidence that so many of them are queuing up to go public. Morgan Stanley, Bear Stearns and L. F. Rothschild head the list of private firms seeking outside capital. It may be that these organisations have calculated that a broader capital base will be necessary to "ensure" competitiveness. If so, Mercury *et al* should mind their eyes.

A simpler explanation may be that the top of a bull market is as good a time as any to cash in chips. Investment banks used to be valued at close to book value; the best can now obtain almost twice book for their equity. Mercantile House is receiving a handsome price for the bulk of its investment in Oppenheimer and now J. Rothschild is adding roughly 13p a share to get out of a two-year capital base. If L. F. Rothschild, if so many silver market operators deem it the right time to sell, the market might ask itself whether this is the appropriate moment to buy.

## Burton/Habitat

It is not unusual for victors to fall to fighting among themselves and the peculiar structure of the bid for Debenhams - a purely tactical alliance - always had the potential for a Berlin-style crisis no sooner had the common enemy been humbled. Sir Terence Conran may have added a certain tone to the allied effort but his hands were left free when the untimely entry of House of Fraser was forcing Burton to deploy all its resources just to win the

## Ericsson

Ericsson forecast late last year that its 1985 results would be horrible, and horrible they are. Profits before tax and allocations have dropped from SKr 1,700m to SKr 365m and would have been lower still but for exceptional gains of SKr 330m. The UK electronics industry is at least in good company.

## Falling oil to fuel German growth

By Rupert Cornwell in Bonn  
WEST GERMAN industrialists, bankers and economic analysts are now busy working out the blessings of the current fall in oil prices, which should enhance what already promises to be a vintage year for the country's economy.

Mr Hans Karl Schneider, chairman of the Government's independent five-man council of economic advisers, says a drop in the price of oil to \$15 a barrel - a prospect now openly held out by Saudi Arabia, the Saudi Arabian Oil Minister - could add at least 0.5 per cent to gross national product (GNP) in 1986.

The "five wise men" have hitherto been anticipating growth of some 3 per cent, a forecast that is at the conservative end of most estimates. Other experts, including the Bundesbank, estimate expansion might already be on course to reach 4 per cent, a fortifying thought for Chancellor Helmut Kohl as he prepares for the federal election early next year.

Mr Schneider also suggested in a radio interview that inflation, currently running at around 1.5 per cent, the lowest level in 17 years, might decline further to barely 1 per cent.

The drop in the oil price, which stands at about \$17 or \$18 a barrel on the spot market at present, has already had an impact at the petrol pump in Germany. Motorists who have long enjoyed one of the lowest pump prices in Europe are now paying DM 1.19 (49 cents) or less a litre of super grade. Cases have been reported of ordinary grade petrol selling for as little as DM 1 a litre.

Mr Thomas Wegscheider, head of the union-owned Bank für Gemeinwirtschaft (BfG), said last week that such prices would save every West German driver DM 200 annually. A 20 per cent fall in the oil price, he added, would boost private consumption by up to DM 10bn - a figure roughly equal to the round of tax cuts which the Government is bringing in this year.

The benefits could even spill over into unemployment, which at 2.8m now represents the biggest blot on the economic record of Mr Kohl's centre-right coalition. Mr Schneider said that the lower oil price, "an economic programme for us financed by the Opec countries," could help create 400,000 new jobs in 1986 in West Germany.

Further, if somewhat deceptive, evidence of the steady improvement in the economy came yesterday with news that West Germany's balance of payments showed a 1985 surplus of DM 1.8bn, compared with a deficit the previous year of DM 3.1bn.

The payments surplus, built on the foundation of record trade and current surpluses of DM 73bn and DM 38.6bn, was kept within respectable proportions only by a substantial increase in capital outflows.

## DAWSON INTERNATIONAL OFFER OVERTAKEN BY NEW MERGER PLAN

## Coats agrees \$1bn bid from Vantona

BY ANTHONY MORETON, TEXTILES CORRESPONDENT, IN LONDON

COATS PATONS, the Scottish-based manufacturer of threads and clothing which last week agreed to a takeover bid from Dawson International, yesterday changed its mind and agreed to a rival £734m (\$1,039m) offer from Vantona Viella.

The bid, if it goes through, will create one of the largest fibres-clothing concerns in the world, capitalised at £1.2bn and with annual sales of £1.69bn.

Mr James McAdam, Coats' managing director, said that, although "the Dawson deal was very strong, especially on brand names, the merger with Vantona Viella was even better."

Mr Ronald Miller, chairman of Dawson, said: "It is astonishing Coats should change its mind so suddenly. I could not have done it."

He would not be drawn on whether Dawson would make a counterbid, though the company has been buying shares in Coats steadily and now has a 2 per cent stake.

Mr David Alliance, managing director of Vantona, said Coats Viella, as the new company will be known, "would be one of the largest and most balanced textile companies in the world, employing some 75,000 people and having a wide spread of products."

Vantona is offering a paper deal under which it will exchange 10 of its ordinary shares for every 17 in Coats Patons. It already owns 10m shares or about 3.5 per cent of Coats' capital.

The offer values Coats shares at 257.5p compared with Dawson's offer of 239p. On the basis of last

night's prices, Vantona's paper offer is being underwritten by a cash alternative of 238.24p a share. Last night, Vantona closed at 438p, down 15p, and Coats Patons at 247p, up 9p. Dawson rose 10p to 210p.

Preliminary results for Vantona for the year to November, also announced yesterday, show profit up £9.8m to £32.1m on turnover £88m higher at £875m. A final dividend of 8p is being paid compared with the 7.5p forecast at the time of the group's merger with Nottingham Manufacturing last June.

Sir James Spenser, chairman of Vantona, is to become non-executive chairman of Coats Viella, with Mr Alliance deputy chairman and chief executive. Mr McAdam will be deputy chairman and deputy chief executive.

Five other executive directors will be appointed from each company. One from Coats will be Mr Michael Bell.

The chief casualty of the merger is Mr Harry Djanogly, deputy chairman and managing director of Vantona since the Nottingham Manufacturing merger, who will become a non-executive director.

The creation of Coats Viella would consummate Mr Alliance's long-held desire for another British company to rival Courtaulds and play a leading role in the world textiles industry.

Vantona's overwhelming strength is supplying clothes, carpets and household textiles to the UK market. Coats gives it a world market, since the Scottish company is a major force in at least 30 countries.

## US plea to Philippines

Continued from Page 1

he" to the Filipino people. Even if Mr Reagan were to conclude that the vote had been credible, which he may well not, Congress is going to be extremely unwilling to approve increased aid in present circumstances.

If, on the other hand, Mrs Aquino emerges as the new President, there is considerable doubt in Washington as to whether she has the political skills needed to unite the country after such a divisive contest.

In the end, Washington may decide that it has to continue to work with Mr Marcos even if he stays in power on a manifestly fraudulent basis. But the Administration would adopt such an approach only with the greatest reluctance. It would not go down well in Capitol Hill, and Washington would clearly be hoping that it would be only a matter of time before Mr Marcos left the scene.

## Van Zyl Slabbert avoids last confrontation with Botha

BY ANTHONY ROBINSON IN CAPE TOWN

THE EXPECTED final confrontation in the South African Parliament between President P. W. Botha and Dr Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, former leader of the white Progressive Federal Party (PFP) opposition who resigned on Friday, failed to take place yesterday.

In a clear reference to the bitter disappointment his resignation has caused leading PFP MPs, Dr van Zyl Slabbert said in a letter to the speaker that his presence could have been an embarrassment to members of the House.

President Botha, who had been expected to take the opportunity to rebuff Dr van Zyl Slabbert's accusations that Parliament had been treated with contempt by the Government and was a "cozy club" unrelated to the real issues facing the country, was told beforehand and also failed to appear.

Dr van Zyl Slabbert's resignation has been welcomed by spokesmen for the United Democratic Front, leading anti-apartheid activists such as Bishop Desmond Tutu and the African National Congress in Lusaka as a vindication of extra-parliamentary opposition to the tri-cameral parliamentary system, which excludes the black majority. But it has dismayed many PFP supporters.

Dr van Zyl Slabbert, an Afrikaaner, not only raised the status and political attractiveness of the PFP among both Afrikaans and English-speaking voters, but also managed to preserve unity between the left and right wings of his party. His loss could re-open the party's internal divisions and weaken its appeal to the more reformist sections of the business community which have until now provided substantial financial and other support.

National Party politicians have meanwhile been trying to heal the wounds within their own party caused by the public humiliation of Mr P. W. Botha, the Foreign Minister, last Friday and the President's restrictive interpretation of the party's reformist policies. According to party sources, Mr P. W. Botha does not intend to resign, and both he and Mr de Klerk sought to minimise their differences at a caucus meeting of Mr de Klerk's Transvaal Party over the weekend.

The "verligte," or liberal, wing of the National Party is still upset at the restrictive interpretation of the Government's advertised reformist intentions but plans to continue to work within the party for changes to key aspects of apartheid legislation.

South Africa violence, Page 4

## Paris currencies proposals

Continued from Page 1

announced shifts in economic policy to intervention in the currency markets.

After a gradual process, Mr Lebourg believes that it would be desirable to institutionalise the system. Without this, he says, it would be "impossible to bear sufficient pressure to bear when awkward domestic economic policy decisions have to be made."

But he recognises that such developments would mean national monetary authorities giving up some of the autonomy they enjoy - "or think they enjoy."

The French Government was one of those to welcome President Reagan's change of tack in his State of the Union message when he asked the US Treasury to explore the idea

of an international conference on "the role and relationship of our currencies."

The French believe that both Japanese and British attitudes towards encouraging exchange rate stability are becoming more favourable. They recognise, however, that the Germans remain opposed because of the difficulties of controlling the flow of international capital movements.

The French believe that reforms of the international monetary system should be discussed within the IMF - thus involving the developing countries. They are against the proposal made by Mr James Baker, the US Treasury Secretary, in April last year for a special conference of industrialised nations.

## World Weather

Area	°C	°F	Area	°C	°F	Area	°C	°F
Alaska	-1	30	London	8	46	Madrid	12	54
Amsterdam	7	45	Los Angeles	15	59	Moscow	-5	23
Athens	15	59	Manila	28	82	Mumbai	28	82
Bahia	25	77	Medan	28	82	Nairobi	22	72
Bombay	28	82	Mexico City	22	72	Rangoon	28	82
Buenos Aires	15	59	Paris	10	50	Seoul	5	41
Calcutta	28	82	Rome	12	54	Singapore	30	86
Cairo	25	77	Sao Paulo	18	64	Taipei	22	72
Cardiff	8	46	Shanghai	10	50	Tokyo	15	59
Chennai	28	82	Shenyang	-5	23	Yokohama	15	59
Colombo	28	82	Singapore	30	86			
Dhaka	28	82						
Dublin	8	46						
Hankow	5	41						
Hong Kong	25	77						
Kobe	15	59						
Kuala Lumpur	28	82						
London	8	46						
Los Angeles	15	59						
Lyons	12	54						
Manila	28	82						
Medan	28	82						
Mexico City	22	72						
Moscow	-5	23						
Mumbai	28	82						
Nairobi	22	72						
Rangoon	28	82						
Seoul	5	41						
Singapore	30	86						
Taipei	22	72						
Tokyo	15	59						
Yokohama	15	59						

Readings at mid-day yesterday.  
S-Daily S-Daily S-Daily S-Daily S-Daily S-Daily  
S-Daily S-Daily S-Daily S-Daily S-Daily S-Daily

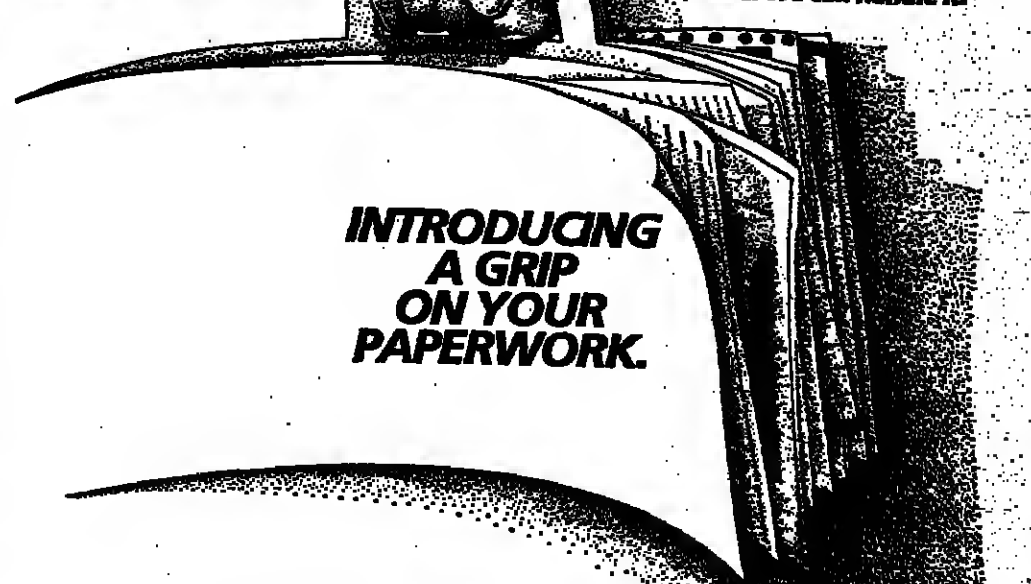
## INTRODUCING A GRIP ON YOUR PAPERWORK.

You have a rather large pile of papers on your desk. It's a major presentation - handwritten notes, bar graphs, charts and typed pages. It must be organised, typed with graphics, including colour charts, duplicated (about 100 copies would do nicely), bound between gold-blocked covers and returned to your desk in 12 hours. Add to that, you need 50 bound copies delivered in New York simultaneously. All that remains is finding someone who can do the impossible - deliver the job.

You're in luck. We can offer you speed, flexibility and total confidentiality. In fact, if you're plagued with any number of paperwork problems, we're here to help. We have the latest black & white and colour copying and duplicating equipment guaranteed to deliver as many copies of anything you want whenever it is needed, 24 hours a day. Our word-processing capabilities allow us to work with any major system. We can optically scan text and statistical material and telecommunicate paper to and from your office at hundreds of pages an hour. With the latest magnetic media conversion hardware and software, we can provide compatibility between incompatible systems, disc to disc or via telecommunications.

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## SECTION II - COMPANIES AND MARKETS

# FINANCIAL TIMES

Tuesday February 11 1986

**DOUGLAS**  
INTEGRITY IN  
CONSTRUCTION

## Daimler-Benz plans sale in AEG bid move

By JOHN DAVIES IN FRANKFURT.

DAIMLER-BENZ, the West German motor vehicle group, is planning to sell its stake in Metallgesellschaft, the mining, metals and trading concern, to fulfil a Cartel Office condition for approving its proposed takeover of the AEG electrical company.

Daimler-Benz has an indirect stake of about 8 per cent in Metallgesellschaft. Along with three equal partners, it has a 25 per cent stake in a holding company which in turn owns 35 per cent of Metallgesellschaft.

It has become clear during the last few weeks that the Cartel Office has been considering how the takeover might add to the market power of Daimler-Benz and AEG, and it wants to maintain competition in various lines of business involved.

Cartel officials are understood, for instance, to want Daimler-Benz's relationship with Siemens, the country's biggest electrical group, to be emphasised rather than co-operation. Siemens, however, is one of Daimler-Benz's partners in the holding company owning a Metallgesellschaft stake.

In addition, Metallgesellschaft owns a majority of Kolbenschmidt, the motor-vehicle components maker, which is an important supplier to Daimler-Benz.

Prof. Werner Breitschwerdt, Daimler's chief executive, has already indicated that the company would go along with the Cartel Office's demands "if they did not hurt too much."

Daimler's holding company partners, including Deutsche Bank and the Allianz insurance group as well as Siemens, will have first opportunity to buy the Metallgesellschaft stake.

Cartel Office concern is also believed to focus on certain aspects of AEG, including its 25 per cent stake in Transformatoren-Union (TU), the loss-making electrical transformer maker. Siemens owns the remaining 75 per cent.

Solving the TU problem to the Cartel Office's satisfaction could take time, but the AEG takeover could get the go-ahead if the Cartel Office was assured that its conditions would be met within a specified time.

Daimler-Benz gained a 24.9 per cent stake in AEG through a capital increase for the purpose.

## Volvo again extends deadline on takeover offer for Cardo

By KEVIN DONE, NORDIC CORRESPONDENT, IN STOCKHOLM

VOLVO yesterday extended its SKr 3.3bn (\$428m) takeover bid for Cardo, the Swedish investment and industrial holding company, for another week. However, it gave a warning that it would withdraw its bid if it failed to attract at least 90 per cent of the Cardo equity.

Volvo has already extended its bid once and has been forced to improve the terms of the offer after mounting local resistance from small shareholders in the northern Swedish province of Skane, where Cardo is located.

The Cardo board reversed its initial acceptance of the Volvo bid and recommended to shareholders in early January that they reject the offer.

The bid was due to expire last Friday, but it appears that Volvo was still some way short of reaching the threshold of 90 per cent, at which it can obtain the compulsory purchase of outstanding shares.

Volvo also stepped up the pressure on recalcitrant Cardo shareholders by stating that there would be no further changes to the terms of the offer.

When it first placed the bid last November, Volvo already owned 22.9 per cent of the Cardo equity. It is planning to combine Cardo's industrial operations - the Swedish Sugar Company, Hilseshog, the seeds and plant-breeding company, and Weibull, the seeds company - with its existing Provender food division. The Cardo equity portfolio is being offered back to existing Cardo shareholders in the form of a new investment company.

As part of the offer Volvo is also bidding SKr 205m for the 17.1 per cent of the Hilseshog equity not already owned by Cardo. Volvo said yesterday that it had already secured more than 90 per cent of Hilseshog, including the Cardo holding, but that the offer would also be withdrawn if the Cardo bid failed.

## Amax Europe director resigns after shake-up

By STEFAN WAGSTYL IN LONDON

MRS ERIKA TORDJMAN, a close associate of Mr Pierre Gousseland, chief executive of Amax, the struggling US mining and metals group, has resigned.

Her resignation as president-director of Paris-based Amax Europe and Climax Molybdenum follows the recent reorganisation of Amax's metals business, which involves the centralisation of responsibilities at Amax headquarters at Greenwich, Connecticut, and the dissolution of Amax Europe and of Climax.

The reorganisation is part of a drastic overhaul of the group being carried out under the direction of Mr Allen Bora, recently elected chief executive officer, who took executive control from Mr Gousseland late last year.

Amax last week announced a net loss of \$108m for the fourth quarter of 1985, making \$621m for the year, against \$238.3m in 1984. In both years there were heavy provisions for write-downs on properties and investments.

The company yesterday declined to comment on the size of any compensation that might be paid to Mrs Tordjman, who joined the company in 1983.

## Kansallis group up 45%

By OUR FINANCIAL STAFF

KANSALLIS Banking Group, parent of Finland's second largest bank, Kansallis-Osake-Pankki, increased consolidated net profits 45 per cent last year to FM 269m (\$49.7m).

Kansallis-Osake-Pankki itself posted a net profit for 1985 of FM 255m, up 29 per cent from 1984, and lifted total assets 20 per cent to FM 67.4bn. Group total assets were also up sharply to FM 81.5bn.

Much of the bank's profits came from foreign-exchange dealing, which earned FM 80.8m. Income from trust services and security business also increased.

Kansallis's increased profits came after a year that saw expansions into international markets

carried out under the direction of Mr Allen Bora, recently elected chief executive officer, who took executive control from Mr Gousseland late last year.

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Kansallis's increased profits came after a year that saw expansions into international markets

## CIR profits ahead 153% at year-end

By James Buxton in Rome

CIR, one of the two industrial and financial holding companies controlled by Mr Carlo de Benedetti, also chairman of Olivetti, last year enjoyed a rise in profits of 153 per cent.

Net profits rose from L15,080m (\$8m) in 1984 to L38,170m. The value of CIR's holdings rose from L272bn at the end of 1984 to L520bn at the end of last year.

CIR's results reflected improved dividends from the companies it controls and expansion of CIR in 1985.

In a year of frenetic activity against the background of a booming Milan Stock Exchange, Mr de Benedetti in 1985 made substantial additions to CIR's portfolio, which already included a number of manufacturing companies and a 13.7 per cent stake in Olivetti.

The most important acquisition by CIR last year was that of control of Buioni, the food manufacturer. CIR also established or increased stakes in other leading Italian companies and in banking institutions, along with acquisitions by Cofide, Mr de Benedetti's other holding company.

CIR's net debt rose last year from L1,780m to L282m. But the company emphasised yesterday that this was temporary and caused by the need to contribute to a L3,000m capital increase in CIR's subsidiary, Sabaudia, at the end of last year.

The debt will be wiped out by two operations launched last month to increase CIR's capital by a total of L207bn. Nominal capital will also go up from L135.9bn to L204.2bn.

CIR said consolidated results for the group were not yet available but would show a big improvement on 1984 results.

CIR will pay an increased dividend of L120 per ordinary share compared with L85 in 1984.

Dumez, a member of the Channel Tunnel Group/France Manche consortium, which will build the fixed link across the Channel, said its turnover last year was FFr 8.7bn. That was down from FFr 9.04bn in 1984 and FFr 11.9bn in 1983.

Bouygues, the leading French building group, has taken a stake in the tourism subsidiary of the state-controlled Havas media and advertising conglomerate. Bouygues and the hotel group Accor are each taking a 15.87 per cent stake in Havas Tourisme by subscribing to a capital increase raising Havas Tourisme's nominal equity from FFr 28.2m to FFr 39.5m.

Havas Tourisme is France's largest travel agency chain with a turnover of FFr 2.35bn last year. The move marks a further step in Bouygues' efforts to diversify away from its mainstream construction business.

It recently enlarged its activities in a range of areas including water distribution, batteries and private television, and last year failed in a bid to take over the French nuclear power-plant manufacturer, Framatome.

Perrier increases earnings

By David Marsh in Paris

SOURCE PERRIER, the leading French mineral water group, boosted net profits to FFr 241.3m (\$32.8m) in the year to September 30 from FFr 195.5m in the previous year.

The results include combining in to the consolidated group of Sella-Leblanc, the mineral water and fruit drinks group brought under Perrier control at the end of 1984. As part of a diversification policy, the company took a small stake last month in the French Canal-Plus pay-TV channel.

The company is proposing a dividend of FFr 12.50 a share (FFr 20.25 with tax credit), up from FFr 12 a share (FFr 18 with tax credit) distributed in 1983-84.

Parent-company net profits showed a sharp drop, falling to FFr 95.5m from FFr 135.3m, with the drinks business hit by bad weather last year.

The company also proposes changing its business year to the calendar year to simplify consolidation of subsidiaries' results.

Ericsson earnings fall by 45%

By Kevin Done in Stockholm

ERICSSON, the Swedish telecommunications and electronics group, suffered a steep drop of 45 per cent in group profits last year, with heavy losses in its information systems division and its US operations.

Profits before tax and allocations fell to SKr 865m (\$114m) from SKr 1,560m in 1984 and SKr 1,780m in 1983.

The decline would have been steeper if earnings had not been bolstered by extraordinary gains of SKr 330m from sales of shares and property. Before extraordinary items, profits plunged by 65 per cent.

Ericsson said yesterday that it was still planning to pay an unchanged dividend for 1985 of SKr 9 a share. Earnings per share fell to SKr 13, compared with SKr 20 in 1984.

The biggest losses last year were incurred up in the troubled information systems business area where the operating deficit was estimated to be well in excess of SKr 500m, compared with losses of SKr 217m reported for 1984.

More detailed financial information will be released on March 13. Profits also declined last year in the public telecommunications division, traditionally the backbone of the Ericsson group, which suffered from the loss of analogue transmission equipment orders in the US as well as from the heavy burden of investment costs for modifying the AXE digital switching system for the US and UK markets.

Ericsson said that the cables, radio communications and network engineering and construction business areas had all shown "considerable increases in income."

Group sales rose by 10.3 per cent to SKr 32.4bn from SKr 29.3bn in 1984.

The group incurred heavy costs during 1985 in its information systems business area because of the need to rectify substantial faults in both its banking terminal, and its MD110 PABX (private branch exchange) systems.

Ericsson also failed in its attempt to break into the US market for personal computers and had to cut back drastically its US information systems operations during 1985. Production of personal computers in Sweden was stopped last June and has not been restarted.

Mr Mats Dellham, vice president for corporate relations, said yesterday that the information systems division had "got rid of a lot of costs" during 1985, however, and expected to break even at an operating level in 1986.

Lex. Page 24

Western Union said yesterday it had retained Dressel Burnham Lambert to help to work out a wide-ranging financial restructuring plan. Apart from the equipment writedown, the company said the plan was likely to include the sale of some of its non-core businesses, together with the long-term extension of Western Union's bank debt, which is now under discussion with the group's bank lenders.

Mr Robert Leventhal, Western Union's chairman and chief executive, who was instrumental in negotiating a new wage contract after a 10-day strike by 6,500 workers last year, said the company hoped to be in a position to announce additional actions in the near future to help to provide the financial stability for the company to continue work on operational improvements.

After taking the fourth-quarter charge - and subject to an end-of-year audit now under way - the group said it expected to report a net loss of about \$370m for 1985. In 1984, the group reported an operating loss of \$63.5m and a final net loss of \$58.4m after an extraordinary tax credit of \$4.9m.

Western Union reported an operating loss of \$42.96m in the fourth quarter of 1984 and a final net loss of \$62.24m after a \$19.3m extraordinary charge. Western Union, which has invested heavily in its Easylink electronic mail service, hoping that revenue gains from electronic mail will offset declining telex business, has been badly affected by higher local telephone charges in the wake of the Bell system break-up at the start of 1984, and by the switch away from telex to computer-to-computer communications.

Mr Leventhal said: "Escalating costs for leased telephone company facilities used to provide Western Union's telex and private wire services, coupled with reduced customer usage of these services, have contributed heavily to the company's operating loss during 1985. To lower our operating costs, we are accelerating our programme to consolidate our services on our new packet-switching network, which should result in improved service to our customers."

Occidental Petroleum, the Los Angeles-based oil group, reported a 22 per cent gain in net profits last year after a \$241m extraordinary gain from federal income-tax benefits on capital losses carried forward.

Net earnings amounted to \$696m, or \$1.49 a share, against \$568.7m, or \$1.03, in 1984, while sales fell to \$19.5bn from \$15.6bn.

Fourth-quarter net income fell to \$52.7m, or 27 cents a share, from \$184m, or \$1.18, despite an extraordinary gain of \$19m, while sales fell to \$3.78bn from \$4.01bn.

Apart from the tax gain, the 1985 results also included \$479m of net gains from the sale of various foreign and domestic oil and gas interests, compared with profits of \$314m on similar disposals in the previous year.

The results describe considerable changes last year in Occidental's complex overseas activities, but the group says its difficulties in Peru, where its contract was unilaterally rescinded last August, are on the way to being resolved after the signing of a new preliminary agreement in late December.

Schlumberger, the big US oil-field services group, plunged to a net loss of \$372.1m, or \$1.25 a share, in the fourth quarter of 1985, after previously announced charges against the struggling Fairchild Semiconductor operation. Our Financial Staff writes.

The fourth-quarter charge was \$486m, consisting of the writedown of \$250m of goodwill, a provision of \$106m for disposal of certain assets, and \$81m for the consolidation of production facilities. Schlumberger had a net profit of \$311.1m, or \$1.06 a share, in the quarter.

Net profits for 1985 as a whole emerged at \$351m, or \$1.17 a share, after charges of \$511m, down from \$1.18bn, or \$4.10 a share, in 1984.

## Western Union to take \$300m special charge

By PAUL TAYLOR IN NEW YORK

WESTERN UNION, the troubled, 135-year-old US telecommunications group, plans to take a special \$300m fourth-quarter charge as part of a "comprehensive financial restructuring" aimed at putting it back on a sound financial footing.

The New Jersey-based group, which has been struggling for more than two years to cut costs and reorganise its business while negotiating a series of debt extensions with its bank lenders, said the charge primarily covered the writedown of older-generation switching and transmission equipment.

The charge appears to represent a further attempt at balance-sheet "house-cleaning" by Western Union. Like other traditional telecommunications companies, it has been forced to write down older equipment serving telex and other traditional telecommunications services while pushing into new businesses such as electronic mail and computer data packet-switching networks.

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bert to help to work out a wide-ranging financial restructuring plan. Apart from the equipment writedown, the company said the plan was likely to include the sale of some of its non-core businesses, together with the long-term extension of Western Union's bank debt, which is now under discussion with the group's bank lenders.

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Commodore loses \$53.2m at midway

By PAUL TAYLOR IN NEW YORK

COMMODORE INTERNATIONAL, the once high-flying home computer manufacturer, yesterday reported a \$53.2m second-quarter loss, mainly reflecting the impact of \$51m in restructuring and other charges.

The loss, the fourth consecutive quarterly deficit for the beleaguered computer maker, comes at a critical time for the company which is involved in extended debt negotiations with its bank lenders.

Commodore had foreboded the loss last month when it announced the closure of two plants, including one in Corby, England, in an attempt to reduce costs. The latest loss compares with a \$32m, or

10 cents a share, profit in the year-ago period as sales which held steady at \$339.2m.

The October-December quarter loss pushed Commodore International's net loss in its first half to \$92.4m against a \$30.9m, or \$1 a share profit, in the year-ago period. Sales fell by 14.5 per cent to \$498.4m from \$582.9m.

Mr Irving Gohl, Commodore's chairman and chief executive, said that the group earned \$1.65m in pre-tax profits during the latest quarter before restructuring charges and special adjustments. Mr Gohl repeated that the company was working closely with its bankers and expected to reach a

satisfactory new lending agreement in the near future. He added that Commodore had retained an unidentified investment bank to aid it with a planned financial restructuring.

Mr Gohl said management had taken "a number of positive steps" to reduce costs, improve the company's competitive stance and better position Commodore for an earnings recovery this year. Commodore said it took a \$22m restructuring charge associated with the closure of assembly plant operations in England and a semiconductor plant in California and special adjustments of \$29m against certain inventory and other assets.

6th February, 1986

This announcement appears as a matter of record only

New logo

KUBOTA

Y20,000,000,000

KUBOTA, LTD.

3 per cent. Bonds Due 1991

with Warrants

to subscribe for shares of common stock of Kubota, Ltd.

Issue Price 100 per cent.

Yamaichi International (Europe) Limited

Banque Indosuez

Chase Investment Bank

Crédit Lyonnais

Fuji International Finance Limited

Kleinwort, Benson Limited

The Nikko Securities Co., (Europe) Ltd.

J. Henry Schroder Wagg & Co. Limited

Sumitomo Finance International

Swiss Volksbank

Bank of Tokyo International Limited

Osakaya International (Europe) Limited

Barclays Merchant Bank Limited

County Bank Limited

Deutsche Bank Capital Markets Limited

Kuwait Investment Company (S.A.K.)

Kreditbank S.A. Luxembourg

Union Bank of Switzerland (Securities) Limited

Baring Brothers & Co., Limited

Credit Suisse First Boston Limited

Dresdner Bank Aktiengesellschaft

Merrill Lynch International & Co.

Citicorp Investment Bank Limited

Daiwa Bank (Capital Management) Limited

IBJ International Limited

Kuwait International Investment Co. (s.a.k.)

Sanwa International Limited

S. G. Warburg & Co. Ltd.

Commerzbank Aktiengesellschaft

Daiwa Europe Limited

Goldman Sachs International Corp.

Kuwait Foreign Trading Contracting & Investment Co. (S.A.K.)

Nonura International Limited

Smith Barney, Harris Upham & Co.

Swiss Bank Corporation International

Westdeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale

New Japan Securities Europe Limited

Bank of Tokyo International Limited

Osakaya International (Europe) Limited

Barclays Merchant Bank Limited

County Bank Limited

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Nonura International Limited

Smith Barney, Harris Upham & Co.

Swiss Bank Corporation International

Westdeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale

New Japan Securities Europe Limited

Bank of Tokyo International Limited

Osakaya International (Europe



NEW ISSUE

This announcement appears as a matter of record only.

February, 1986

**SEK****Aktiebolaget Svensk Exportkredit  
(Swedish Export Credit Corporation)**

(Incorporated in the Kingdom of Sweden with limited liability)

**U.S.\$ 100,000,000****9 1/4 per cent. Bonds due 10th October, 1993**

ISSUE PRICE 101 1/2 per cent.

Daiwa Europe Limited

Bankers Trust International Limited  
Merrill Lynch Capital MarketsGoldman Sachs International Corp.  
Morgan Stanley InternationalBank of Tokyo International Limited  
Credit Suisse First Boston LimitedCiticorp Investment Bank Limited  
Dai-ichi Kangyo International LimitedEnskilda Securities  
Skandinaviska Enskilda LimitedFirst Chicago Limited  
Nippon Credit International (HK) Ltd.

Mitsubishi Finance International Limited

Prudential Bache Securities

Post-och Kreditbanken, PKbanken

Sumitomo Trust International Limited

Sumitomo Finance International

Swiss Bank Corporation International Limited

Svenska Handelsbanken Group

Union Bank of Switzerland (Securities) Limited

S.G. Warburg &amp; Co. Ltd.

Yasuda Trust Europe Limited

These securities having been sold, this announcement appears as a matter of record only.

**Cable and Wireless plc****4,812,500 Ordinary Shares**

These securities have been underwritten and placed in Canada by the undersigned.

**Dominion Securities Pitfield Limited**

Kleinwort, Benson Limited acted as financial advisors to Cable and Wireless plc.

December 1985

**INTL. COMPANIES & FINANCE****Swiss Volksbank plans second rights issue to raise SFr 176m**

BY JOHN WICKS IN BERNE

SWISS Volksbank, of Berne, is to raise SFr 176.85m (\$87.12m) by a rights issue. That follows the placement last month of 60,000 ordinary shares on the Euromarket to increase the bank's capital resources by a total of SFr 332m since the beginning of the year.

The new transaction involves a one-for-10 issue of 103,000 ordinary shares at SFr 1,450 each and 180,000 participation certificates at SFr 145 each. Subscription will be open from February 17 to 26.

Last week, the bank announced a proposed increase in its dividend from SFr 60 to SFr 70 a share and from SFr 6 to SFr 7 for participation certificates. That followed a 34.8 per cent improvement in net earnings to a record SFr 101.1m.

Mr Walter Ruegg, management chairman said in Berne yesterday that the growth of the balance sheet by 13.9 per cent to SFr 25.8m in 1985 was due partly to the opening of the London branch.

It took over the unconsolidated activities of the former Luxembourg subsidiary and was largely responsible for a 22.2 per cent rise in the due-from-banks total to SFr 3,270m.

The growth of the foreign share of total balance-sheet assets from 18.5 to 22.2 per cent was also largely the result of the inauguration of the London operation.

Spain's Banco de Santander and Banco Exterior have announced increased pre-tax profits for 1985, in keeping with the trend established

by the banking sector, writes Tom Burns in Madrid.

Banco de Santander, ranked sixth among the country's seven leading private banks, recorded a profit of Pta 18.4bn (\$121m), a 19 per cent increase on its pre-tax profit the previous year. The bank will be paying a dividend of Pta 75 a share, Pta 9 more than a year earlier.

Growth was more modest at Banco Exterior, where its chairman, Mr Miguel Boyer, the former Economy Minister, announced profits of Pta 5.9bn - a 16 per cent increase over 1984 results. A year ago, Banco Exterior, which is majority state-held and finances Spanish exports, recorded a similar pre-tax profit increase.

**Rothschild will yield control of NY firm**

By Terry Dodsworth

MR JACOB ROTHSCCHILD, the London-based financier, is to give up financial control of L. F. Rothschild, Untermyer, Townshend, New York investment banking firm, as part of a stock offering that will reduce his stake from 50 per cent to 18 per cent.

The decision to take the company public follows a similar move by Morgan Stanley, another blue-chip investment bank, as the private partnerships that have traditionally dominated Wall Street are giving up independence to strengthen their competitive position.

L. F. Rothschild will offer 6m shares at an indicated price of \$16 to \$19 a share to bring its total number of shares in issue to 16.5m, of which Mr Rothschild will continue to hold 3m.

**FF 900 MILLION CONVERTIBLE BOND ISSUE**

Principal amount:

FF 900,000,000 (issue of 600,000 bonds).

Issue price:

at par, FF 1,500 each.

Subscription:

Shareholder preferential subscription rights:

from February 3 through February 17, 1986 on the basis of 2 bonds for every 9 shares held. (Holders of convertible bonds issued by CIT Alcatel in 1980 and 1983 may exercise preferential subscription rights if they have converted their bonds into shares before February 17, 1986.)

Public subscription:

open from February 18, 1986.

Delivery:

as from March 4, 1986.

Transferability:

as from March 6, 1986.

Interest:

7.75% per annum (FF 116.25 per bond, payable January 1st of each year). The first coupon of FF 96.50 will be paid January 1st, 1987.

Maximum term:

7 years, 9 months and 28 days.

Scheduled redemption:

in 4 equal annual installments, the first redemption taking place on January 1st, 1991.

Call option:

• on January 1st, 1988, 1989 or 1990, under certain conditions linked to the Alcatel share price during the three months prior to those dates;  
• or at any time through repurchases in the open market or if the number of unredeemed bonds falls below 10% of the total number of bonds outstanding.

Listing:

on the Paris Stock Exchange at the close of the issue.

Conversion of the bonds:

at any time after January 1st, 1987, at the ratio of one FF 100 par value share for each FF 1,500 par value bond.

The prospectus, in French, registered with the French Securities Commission (Commission des Opérations de Bourse), may be obtained from Crédit Commercial de France, Direction des Opérations sur Titres, 144 av. des Champs-Élysées 75008 Paris, France. An English translation is also available upon request.

CRÉDIT COMMERCIAL DE FRANCE - SOCIÉTÉ GÉNÉRALE

BANQUE NATIONALE DE PARIS - BANQUE PARIBAS - CRÉDIT LYONNAIS - BANQUE INDOCHINE - ÉLECTRO BANQUE - MORGAN GUARANTY TRUST - SHEARSON LEHMAN BROTHERS INTERNATIONAL, Inc. - S.G. WARBURG & Co Ltd - DILLON READ - BANQUE DE NEULIZE SHUMBERGER MALLET



This advertisement complies with the requirements of the Council of The Stock Exchange.

**Forsmarks Kraftgrupp Aktiebolag**

(Incorporated in Sweden with limited liability)

**U.S. Dollars 100,000,000****8 1/2 per cent. Guaranteed Notes due 1991**Guaranteed by The Kingdom of Sweden  
Issue Price 100 1/2 per cent.

Svenska Handelsbanken Group

Goldman Sachs International Corp.

Application has been made for the Notes, in bearer form in the denomination of USD 5,000 each, constituting the above issue to be admitted to the Official List by the Council of The Stock Exchange, subject only to the issue of the temporary global note. Interest will be payable annually in arrears on 15th February, the first payment being made on 15th February, 1987.

Particulars of the Notes and of Forsmarks Kraftgrupp Aktiebolag are available in the statistical services of Extel Statistical Services Limited. Copies of the listing particulars relating to the Notes may be obtained during usual business hours on any weekday (Saturdays and public holidays excepted) from the Company Announcements Office of The Stock Exchange, 1 Throgmorton Street, London EC2P 2BT, during the period of two business days following the date hereof or during usual business hours on any weekday (Saturdays and public holidays excepted) at the addresses shown below during the period of fourteen days from the date hereof.

Svenska International Limited,  
17 Devonshire Square,  
London EC2M 4SQRome & Pissano,  
1 Finsbury Avenue,  
London EC2M 2FABankers Trust Company,  
Deskwood House,  
69 Old Broad Street,  
London EC2P 2EE

11th February 1986

**U.S. \$250,000,000****BANK OF BOSTON CORPORATION**

Subordinated

Floating Rate Notes Due 2001

Interest Rate 8 1/4% per annum

Interest Period 10th February 1986

12th May 1986

Interest Amount per U.S. \$50,000 Note due 12th May 1986 U.S. \$1,034.81

Credit Suisse First Boston Limited  
Agent Bank**U.S. \$60,000,000****Banamex**

Banco Nacional de México, S.A.

Floating Rate Subordinated Notes Due 1992

Interest Rate 8 1/4% per annum

Interest Period 10th February 1986

11th August 1986

Interest Amount per U.S. \$5,000 Note due 11th August 1986 U.S. \$210.12

Credit Suisse First Boston Limited  
Agent Bank**PAN HOLDING**Société Anonyme  
Luxembourg

As of January 31, 1986, the unconsolidated net asset value was US\$282,088,824.77, i.e. US\$288.63 per share of US\$50 par value. The consolidated net asset value per share amounted as of January 31, 1986, to US\$288.95.

**STOCKHOLDERS FAR EAST INVESTMENTS INC.**

Net Asset Value 31st January 1986  
**\$3.09**  
per share (unaudited)

**ENERGY RESOURCES & SERVICES INCORPORATED**

Net Asset Value 31st January 1986  
**\$7.09**  
per share (unaudited)

**US DOLLAR THE WORLD VALUE**

IN THE FT EVERY FRIDAY

**BASE LENDING RATES**

ABN Bank	12 1/2%	Hambros Bank	12 1/2%
Allied Dunbar & Co.	12 1/2%	Heritable & Gen. Trust	12 1/2%
Allied Irish Bank	12 1/2%	Hill Samuel	12 1/2%
American Express Bk.	12 1/2%	C. Hoare & Co.	12 1/2%
Amro Bank	12 1/2%	Hongkong & Shanghai	12 1/2%
Bank of America	12 1/2%	Johnson Matthey Bkrs.	12 1/2%
Bank of Canada	12 1/2%	Knowles & Co. Ltd.	12 1/2%
Bank of China	12 1/2%	Lloyds Bank	12 1/2%
Bank of India	12 1/2%	Edward Manna & Co.	12 1/2%
Bank of Japan	12 1/2%	Meghraji & Sons Ltd.	12 1/2%
Bank of Korea	12 1/2%	Midland Bank	12 1/2%
Bank of London	12 1/2%	Morgan Grenfell	12 1/2%
Bank of Mexico	12 1/2%	Mount Credit Corp. Ltd.	12 1/2%
Bank of New York	12 1/2%	National Bk. of Kuwait	12 1/2%
Bank of Persia	12 1/2%	National Girobank	12 1/2%
Bank of Portugal	12 1/2%	National Westminster	12 1/2%
Bank of Romania	12 1/2%	Northern Bank Ltd.	12 1/2%
Bank of Russia	12 1/2%	Norwich Gen. Trust	12 1/2%
Bank of Spain	12 1/2%	People's Trust	12 1/2%
Bank of Sweden	12 1/2%	PK Finance Ind. (UK)	12 1/2%
Bank of Switzerland	12 1/2%	Provincial Trust Ltd.	12 1/2%
Bank of the Middle East	12 1/2%	R. Raphael & Sons	12 1/2%
Bank of the South	12 1/2%	Roxburgh Guarantees	12 1/2%
Bank of the West	12 1/2%	Royal Bank of Scotland	12 1/2%
Bank of the East	12 1/2%	Royal Trust Co. Canada	12 1/2%
Bank of the North	12 1/2%	Standard Chartered	12 1/2%
Bank of the South	12 1/2%	TCS	12 1/2%
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## INTL. COMPANIES &amp; FINANCE

## India's state banks ahead 32.5%

BY JOHN ELLIOTT IN NEW DELHI AND R. C. MURTHY IN BOMBAY

INDIA'S nationalised banks increased their aggregate net profits during 1985 by 32.5 per cent to Rs11,112m (US\$685.5m), according to Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh, the country's Finance Minister.

He issued this estimate at a meeting with chief executives of 21 public sector banks in New Delhi and said the improvement was the result of the Government and the banks trying to improve efficiency and productivity.

A year ago the heads of three of the banks were sacked and Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister, launched an overhaul of the banking system and an attack on corruption. There have been other widespread dismissals since then.

The Central Bureau of Investigation estimates that corruption involving more than Rs100m was uncovered on

**BANK OF CEYLON**, Sri Lanka's premier bank, showed a drop in pre-tax profits to Rs200m (US\$12.5m) last year, against Rs230m, writes Maryn de Silva in Colombo.

Dr L. K. M. Fernando, its chairman, said the bank had to close non-interest bearing deposits totalling Rs2.1bn to the central bank on the orders of the Finance Ministry in August.

January 31 in raids on the homes and offices of 48 bank executives around the country. Large quantities of gold and silver were found during the raids, including 3.5kg of jewellery in one employee's private office safe.

The profit increase from

He added that, following a one percentage point reduction in interest rates in October, the bank had recently appealed to the ministry to exempt reserves with its provincial branches. This would mean that only about Rs1.7bn would go into non-interest bearing deposits.

"What we dropped in the interest rate four months ago, we had hoped to recover in expanded business but expansion has been slow."

R830m in 1984 for the 21 nationalised banks followed a slight decline from Rs940m post-tax in 1983. The 21 banks account for 91.5 per cent of India's banking system.

Deposits last year grew by 18.6 per cent to Rs765bn compared with a 17 per cent

increase in 1984. Profits were partially boosted by an increase from 12.5 to 14 per cent in interest rates charged on Rs 50bn of bank funds lent to government-owned food grain procuring agencies under the country's price support programme. There was also a coupon rate increase on 30-year government securities.

The three banks with best results were the country's largest, the Bombay-based State Bank of India, and two south Indian banks—the Canara and the Corporation.

State Bank of Canara expanded their merchant banking activities. Mr I. D. Ratnakar, Canara Bank chairman, said merchant banking had become a 'major profit centre.'

Despite the surge, net profits as a percentage of working funds is still low. For the State Bank of India, the ratio was 0.101 per cent in 1984.

## BP in NZ joint gas venture

BY GORDON CRANE

BRITISH PETROLEUM is to expand its liquid petroleum gas interests in New Zealand with the joint purchase of Rockgas, an LPG wholesaler and retailer, from Fletcher Challenge, the forestry and farming group which is the country's largest company in turnover terms.

BP—which itself ranks as the third biggest company in New Zealand—will own Rockgas equally with New Zealand Industrial Gases (NZIG). In addition, the UK-based company is to increase its holding in Liquegas, a bulk LPG distribution consortium, to 35.25 per cent from the current 18.75 per cent.

This will also come about with the purchase of the stake in Liquegas held by Fletcher, which has been acting over the past six months in particular to reduce on its core businesses. The total value of the deals announced yesterday was put at NZ\$20.5m (US\$14m).

BP's New Zealand activities cover the range of energy exploration and production and downstream marketing. It has sizeable minority stakes in the country's two major gas fields, one of which its involvement in the Liquegas consortium arose.

The disposals by Fletcher, which follow the recent sale of two financial services sub-

sidiaries, remain subject to approval by the country's Commerce Commission and Overseas Investment Commission. Fletcher at the same time is considering buying a dominant role in the New Zealand steel making industry by taking over the 51.2 per cent holding in NZ Steel recently acquired by the Government.

BP and NZIG, while keeping intact the Rockgas unit, will continue independent service to existing LPG customers. On the Wellington Stock Exchange, Fletcher shares rose 12 cents yesterday to NZ\$3.52. Those in NZIG were steady at NZ\$2.62.

## Advance at Western Mining

By Kenneth Marston, Mining Editor

AUSTRALIA'S Western Mining Corporation has lifted net earnings in the 28 weeks to December to A\$35.2m (US\$17.5m or £12.4m) from A\$13.8m in the same period of 1984.

Earnings per share were 6.9 cents, and the interim dividend has been doubled to 4 cents. The company benefited from the fall in the value of the Australian dollar against the US dollar, in which its metal sales are priced. This resulted in a 16 per cent gain in domestic gold prices received and a rise of 11 per cent in the prices of nickel despite a 5 per cent fall in US nickel prices.

Western Mining is not prepared to venture any forecast of second-half results, which, it points out, are dependent on volatile movements in metal prices and the Australian dollar.

## Alcan Australia raises net

By Our Financial Staff

ALCAN AUSTRALIA, the local arm of the Canadian aluminium group, achieved a modest advance in net earnings to A\$16.18m (US\$11.26m) last year, up from A\$15.51m. On a per-share basis, however, profits were nearly halved to 10.7 cents from 20.5 cents, following equity issues during 1985 designed to secure capital through its parent. The dividend is maintained at 6 cents a share.

Turnover rose from A\$313.68m to A\$345.18m, while non-operating income showed a boost to A\$11.38m compared with A\$313.63m. The attributable result was held back by rises of A\$4.2m in depreciation and A\$2.26m in interest

## BANCO DE SANTANDER

Established 1857

## Financial Highlights

Banco de Santander Consolidated  
(US dollars\* in millions)

	At year end 1985	1984	Increase %
Income before taxes	153.3	114.1	34.4
Net income	112.9	83.2	35.7
Depreciation, writedowns and provisions	276.9	192.7	43.7
Loans and discounts	5,533.5	4,508.9	22.7
Customers' deposits	10,168.2	8,479.6	19.9
Shareholders' equity	762.2	651.8	16.9
Earnings per share (US dollars)	1.22	0.94	29.8
Dividend per share (US dollars)	0.49	0.43	13.9

\*Conversion rate: US\$1 = 153.96 Spanish pesetas

Number of shareholders: 359,109 • 1,580 offices in 23 countries



The Annual Shareholders' Meeting of Banco de Santander was held on 8th February, 1986 in Santander, Spain.

If you would like a copy of the 1985 Annual Report, please telephone or write to the Manager, Banco de Santander, 10 Moorgate, London EC2R 6LB, telephone: 01-606 7766, or contact: Banco de Santander, International Division, Alcalá 37, 28014 Madrid, Spain.

## Bophuthatswana casino group lifts forecast

By Our Johannesburg Correspondent

SUN INTERNATIONAL Bophuthatswana (SIB), the casino and entertainment company which operates in the so-called 'independent' South African black homeland of Bophuthatswana, expects to improve on the earnings forecast for the current year.

Ahead of last year's sale of shares to the public, SIB's directors had estimated that net earnings for the year to June would match the 26.7 cents a share achieved in the previous year.

First-half turnover increased by 17 per cent to R22.8m (US\$3.8m) and operating profits increased to R18.5m from R13.5m. The company did not incur a tax liability, and its interim profit attributable to ordinary shareholders rose to R14.5m from R13.2m or 16.3 cents a share against 15.1 cents.

## Strong exports boost for Highveld Steel

BY JIM JONES IN JOHANNESBURG

HIGHVELD STEEL and Vanadium, the South African steel and ferro-alloys maker, increased sales to a record R662.1m (US\$10m) in 1985 from R450.2m in 1984, thanks largely to increased exports.

Exports comprised 58 per cent of turnover last year against 49 per cent in 1984. The pre-tax profit rose to R40.5m from R29.8m.

Mr Leslie Boyd, the chairman, said sales volumes of steel, ferro-alloys and vanadium pentoxide were all substantially higher, and export revenues were aided by the rand's weakness. The steel export tonnage increased by 78 per cent despite the fact that the US and Europe, which are Highveld's major export markets, both apply quantitative import restrictions.

Local demand for steel remained steady, but should improve further this year, Mr Boyd said. Nevertheless, sales in South Africa remained affected

by the recession. Earnings per share increased to 38 cents from 38.9 cents and the total dividend has been raised to 24 cents from 17 cents.

Highveld is a subsidiary of Anglo American Industrial Corporation (AMIC), the industrial arm of Anglo American Corporation, South Africa's largest mining house.

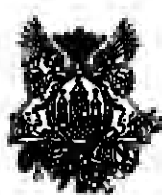
Chubb Holdings, the South African security group which is 72 per cent owned by Racal Electronics of the UK, increased its market share in the 28 weeks ended October 31, 1985, although its physical security division was affected by the down turn in the construction and building industries.

Turnover during the 28 weeks was R37.47m (US\$7.6m) against R30.07m in the six months ended September 1984. Trading profit before interest and tax was R2.35m against R1.9m and the pre-tax profit was R1.5m against R960,000.

NEW ISSUE

All these Bonds have been sold. This announcement appears as a matter of record only.

December 20, 1985



## CITY OF COPENHAGEN

ECU 40,000,000  
9% 1985-1995 Bonds

Kredietbank International Group Privatbanken A/S

Bank Brussel Lambert N.V. Crédit Commercial de France  
Generale Bank

Algemeene Bank Nederland N.V. Banque Indosuez  
Banque Paribas Capital Markets Limited Berliner Handels- und Frankfurter Bank  
Commerzbank Aktiengesellschaft  
Crédit Communal de Belgique S.A./Gemeentekrediet van België N.V.  
Crédit Lyonnais Credit Suisse First Boston Limited  
Deutsche Bank Capital Markets Limited Eschke & Co. Securities Limited  
Morgan Guaranty Ltd PK Christian Bank (UK) Limited  
Union Bank of Switzerland (Securities) Limited Yamaichi International (Europe) Limited

Al-Mal Group ASLE-OGER Bank Banca Commerciale Italiana Banca del Gottardo Banco di Roma  
Bank für Gemeinwirtschaft Bank Ippa Bank Mees & Hope NV Bank of Tokyo International Bankverein Bremen AG  
Banque du Bazar S.A. Banque Générale du Luxembourg S.A. Banque Internationale à Luxembourg S.A. Banque de Luxembourg S.A.  
Banque Nationale de Paris Banque de l'Union Européenne Bayerische Vereinsbank Berlior Bank  
Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg (Banque de l'Etat) Chase Bank of Commerce Chemical Bank International Group  
CIBC Limited Compagnie de Banque et d'Investissements, CH Compagnie Monégasque de Banque Copenhagener Handelsbank A/S County Bank  
Creditanstalt-Bankverein Crédit Agricole Crédit Général Crédit Industriel d'Alsace et de Lorraine Crédit Industriel et Commercial de Paris  
Crédit du Nord Credito Italiano Daiwa Europe Den Danske Provinsbank A/S Den nordiske Creditbank (Luxembourg) S.A.  
DGB Bank Dresdner Bank EBC Amro Bank Genossenschaftliche Zentralbank AG Girozentrale und Bank der österreichischen Sparkassen  
Goldman Sachs International Corp. Hamburg Bank Handelsbank N.V. (Overseas) Hessische Landesbank - Girozentrale  
Istituto Bancario San Paolo di Torino KB International (Hong Kong) Kleinwort, Benson Kreditbank N.V. E van Lanschot Bankiers N.V.  
London & Continental Bankers ICB International Manufakturbank Hannover Mitsubishi Finance International Morgan Grenfell & Co.  
Morgan Stanley International Nederlandse Middelenbank NV Nederlandse Credietbank N.V. The Nikko Securities Co. (Europe) Ltd.  
Norddeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale Orion Royal Bank Fictis International Ltd. Pierson, Harding & Pierson N.V.  
Rabobank Nederland Sawa International Société Générale Societ Generale Alsacienne de Banque  
Société Nationale de Crédit à l'Industrie/Nationale Maatschappij voor Krediet aan de Nijverheid Sanitomo Trust International  
Svenska Handelsbanken Group United Overseas Bank (Luxembourg) S.A. Veritas- und Westbank Wendeische Landesbank Girozentrale Wood Gundy Inc.

The founding partners of  
Koç Holding A.Ş. and American Express Bank Ltd.  
are pleased to announce the opening of:

## Koç-Amerikan Bank A.Ş.

ISTANBUL, TURKEY

KOÇ HOLDING A.Ş.

AMERICAN EXPRESS BANK LTD.  
An American Express company



## INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES and FINANCE

Alexander Nicoll on a shift in emphasis by a corporate treasurer

## Centralising debt pays off for BAT

SINCE Mr Richard Desmond took over two years ago as treasurer of BAT Industries, the UK tobacco, retailing and financial services group, he has managed its debt and currency exposure through an extraordinary sequence of acquisitions and disposals.

BAT's move into financial services through the acquisition of the Eagle Star and Allied Dunbar (formerly Hambro Life) insurance groups, coupled with the reversal of some previous diversification moves, has provided a classic challenge to any debt manager's skills. Further problems have been posed by volatile currency markets, with the dollar's decline damaging BAT's profits when stated in sterling terms.

Since the beginning of Mr Desmond's tenure, BAT has spent £1.7bn on major acquisitions. Total group borrowings doubled to £2.54bn in 1984, pushing up the debt/equity ratio from 37 to 54 per cent. The purchase of Allied Dunbar raised the ratio to 64 per cent, though this was subsequently reduced by cash-flow and disposals.

Not only has debt increased; it has been substantially restructured. To facilitate this, management of borrowing was largely shifted away from operating units towards the centre, with three centrally controlled financing subsidiaries. "There was no change in management philosophy," says Mr Desmond. "It is simply that there are better borrowing opportunities this way."

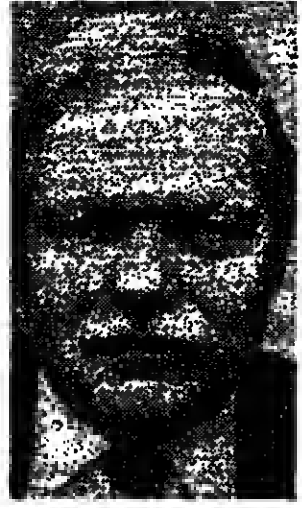
The result has been marked decreases in the proportions of short-term, bank-lent, floating-rate borrowings, and increases in long-term, publicly traded and fixed-rate debt.

In 1984, the amount of debt

## MAJOR USES AND SOURCES OF FUNDS

Jan 1 1984 to May 31 1985

Uses	£m
Eagle Star	968
Allied Dunbar	664
IMASCO	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,731</b>
Sources	£m
Cash	380
<b>Debt:</b>	
Unsec. loan stock	495
Capital notes	51
Loan notes	182
Eurobond	100
Standby-backed CP	262
<b>Disposals:</b>	
International Stores	180
Confection	105
Marion packing	170
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,925</b>



Mr Richard Desmond: in search of better borrowing opportunities

removal of legal barriers to the creation of a sterling commercial paper market, BAT's £495m of 12½ per cent unsecured loan stock due 2003-08 is the largest such issue, accounting for about a quarter of the market.

The company has also issued £12m of shorter-term unsecured loan notes and £51m of capital notes.

A further £100m was raised in 1984 with a seven-year 10½

A string of disposals—including International Stores and Confection (some US retailing interests are now on the block as well as Grovewood Securities in the UK)—has enabled BAT to repay part of its debt.

The swing away from bank borrowings accelerated in 1985. BAT is, however, conscious of the need to keep its debt marketable and well-known with as

many groups of investors as possible, so it would always keep a certain amount of short-term debt outstanding, for example, in the US commercial paper market.

Mr Desmond has resisted the temptation to cut borrowing costs by using swaps, because he says this would reduce the group's flexibility in repaying debt when the opportunity arose. The choice of what debt to sell or to retire is also influenced by the currencies in which assets and cashflows are denominated.

Like many other multinational companies, BAT has two distinct policies on covering currency exposure. Profits made by US subsidiaries which are remitted back to the UK, are not hedged. The company thus has to accept, and explain to shareholders, the effects of a dollar fall on the sterling-denominated profit and loss account.

That this exposure could be neutralised with the use of currency options, but says the premiums are "a lot of money to spend to dress up a figure."

BAT does hedge actual flows of cash. The need to do it for day-to-day transactions between group companies is limited by the fact that there is only a small amount—10 per cent of turnover—of cross-border inter-company trading.

In 1985, about £150m flowed into the centre from subsidiaries in the form of dividends, including about £150m. BAT maintains a pool of dollar inflows, and last year sold it forward as well as part of expected 1986 inflows, thus protecting them from the dollar's fall. "We do not take enormous risks but we do trade our foreign exchange," says Mr Desmond.

## Amsterdam SE accepts Japanese houses

By Laura Rann in Amsterdam

THE AMSTERDAM Stock Exchange has accepted three of the big four Japanese securities houses as full members in an energetic bid to become the leading European centre for trading in Japanese shares priced in yen.

The acceptance of Daiwa, Nomura and Yamachi plus the introduction of Japanese share trading linked with the Tokyo Stock Exchange clearly is an effort by Amsterdam to get a head start on London. This will be the first foreign trading of Japanese stocks in yen. The London Stock Exchange recently received a membership application from the powerful Nomura and may feel compelled to hasten approval in light of the aggressive Amsterdam move.

Baron van Ierssum, the Amsterdam Stock Exchange, made the announcement yesterday flanked by Mr M. Shimano of Nomura and Mr H. Yamauchi of Yamachi. The Japanese trio has chosen a kind of membership that allows floor trading through another broker or bank in order to keep initial investments low.

In July, it is expected that fungible trading will begin in 25 Japanese companies which are also listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange. These stocks can be traded in Amsterdam after the close in Tokyo under an agreement between the two bourses.

The 25 companies have already been traded in Amsterdam under the Continental depositary receipt system, but lack of liquidity has prevented efficient pricing and dividend payments were often delayed. The new system involves electronic book entries and certificates, plus the active promotion of the Japanese houses, is expected to attract the institutional investors needed to give depth to the market. Dividend payments can be made more punctually because of the electronic communications.

Nikko Securities, the other broker in the Japanese trio, was predicted from joining the Amsterdam exchange because it has no existing Dutch presence. Unlike the others, which set up Amsterdam offices during the 1970s, Nikko serves the Dutch market from its European base in London, adds Gordon Cramb.

Nikko is, however, understood to be reviewing the possibility of opening a Netherlands office, a move which would require the approval of the Japanese Ministry of Finance. It already has branches in West Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg.

## Quiet Eurodollar sector shows signs of recovery

BY MAGGIE URRY

THE EURODOLLAR bond market showed signs of recovery yesterday after its fall on Friday afternoon. Yet it was still in a subdued mood, and little activity was seen. Traders pointed out that with holidays in the Far East and on the Continent, this week is likely to see limited investor interest.

Shearson Lehman Brothers tried to tempt investors with a new structure which has proved popular in the US domestic market. The idea gives the borrower, in this case Gamett, the US newspaper group which owns USA Today, cheaper funds initially but gives investors the prospect of a higher yield later.

The \$100m issue has a 10-year life but after four years investors can decide whether to exercise a put option to redeem the bonds at par or to hold on to the bonds which will then carry a higher coupon. The first coupon is 8½ per cent and it rises to 9½ per cent for the last six years—hence the name "step-up put bonds."

The initial coupon was seen as rather aggressive for the borrower, which is AA rated though not well known in

Europe. With fees of 11 per cent, the yield for the first four years is around 25 basis points above that on four-year US Treasury bonds. The issue was not trading widely yesterday afternoon, though a 1½ point discount to the par issue price.

BMW, the West German car manufacturer, launched a \$475m issue with bond warrants. The popularity of the name should offset somewhat aggressive terms. The 10-year bond pays a 13½ per cent coupon and is priced at 100½. They are non-callable for five years and then at prices starting at 101½ and declining by ½ point a year to par.

The 75,000 warrants, priced at \$50 each, receive interest at \$56.875 annually for the first five years. After that they can be exercised into a non-callable bond.

Orion Royal Bank led the issue, which is likely to have been connected with a swap giving BMW US dollar funds well below London inter-bank offered rate. The bonds were trading within the 2½ per cent fees, and the warrants were above issue price.

The D-mark market was quiet yesterday; many dealers were away from their desks enjoying the carnival holiday.

Swiss franc foreign bond prices were around a point higher in low turnover. A number of new deals were launched, Mitsubishi Electric is raising Sfr 200m through a five-year private placement with a 5½ per cent coupon and par issue price. Lead manager is UBS.

Credit Suisse launched the expected equity-linked deal for Thomson-Brandt, the French electronics group which follows last week's Eurodollar convertible issue. The Sfr 100m 12-year bonds have an indicated yield of 4½ per cent and carry warrants to buy Thomson-CSF shares.

Morgan Guaranty (Switzerland) announced an issue of 200,000 warrants priced in dollars, to buy a Swiss franc fixed-rate bond. The borrower is FKBanker and the warrants were priced at \$25.50. They have an 18-month life and there are six exercise dates at quarterly intervals. Five warrants buy one Sfr 5,000 bond maturing on March 15, 1994 and paying a 5½ per cent coupon.

## Amrobank launches CD issue

BY OUR AMSTERDAM CORRESPONDENT

AMSTERDAM - ROTTERDAM Bank (Amrobank) is launching today a F1 500m issue of three, six and 12-month certificates of deposit. The bank has issued since the Dutch capital markets liberalisation began this year. The issue price of the CDs, which are denominated in amounts of F1 2.5m, is based on the discount method under

which the accruing interest is paid at maturity. Three and six-month interest rates are currently 5½ per cent while 12-month rates are 5½ per cent.

Buyers can choose between giro delivery or book entry registry, with giro delivery handled by Euroclear of Brussels. Amrobank will make a market in the CDs.

Algemene Bank Nederland made the first CD offer, a F1 800m issue, followed by Nederlandse Credietbank with an open-ended CD programme last week. New issues under the liberalised regulations have quickened recently, with several mortgage bank bonds and a foreign-guilder note from Heineken.

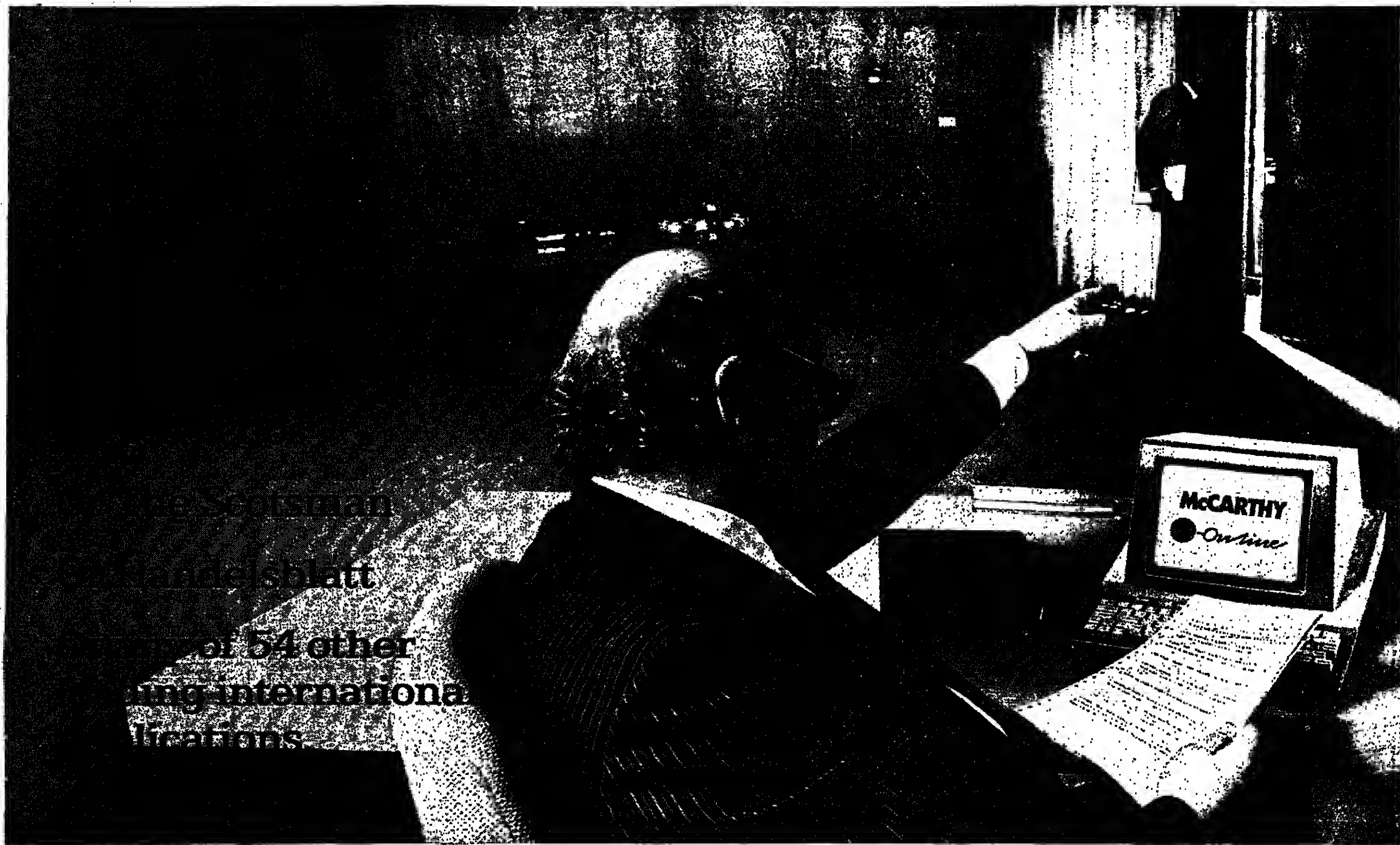
## FT INTERNATIONAL BOND SERVICE

Listed are the 200 latest international bonds for which there is an adequate secondary market. Closing prices on February 10

US DOLLAR	Issued	Bid	Offer	Day	Week	Yield
Amro 10% 92	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 93	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 94	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 95	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 96	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 97	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 98	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 99	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 00	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 01	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 02	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 03	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 04	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 05	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 06	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 07	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 08	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 09	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 10	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 11	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 12	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 13	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 14	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 15	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 16	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
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Amro 10% 26	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 27	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 28	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
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Amro 10% 34	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 35	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 36	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
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Amro 10% 39	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 40	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 41	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 42	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 43	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 44	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 45	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
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Amro 10% 48	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 49	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 50	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 51	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 52	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
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Amro 10% 54	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 55	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 56	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 57	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
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Amro 10% 61	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
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Amro 10% 54	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
Amro 10% 55	100	100.00	100.00	+0.00	-0.00	8.50
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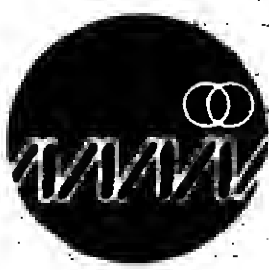
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## UK COMPANY NEWS

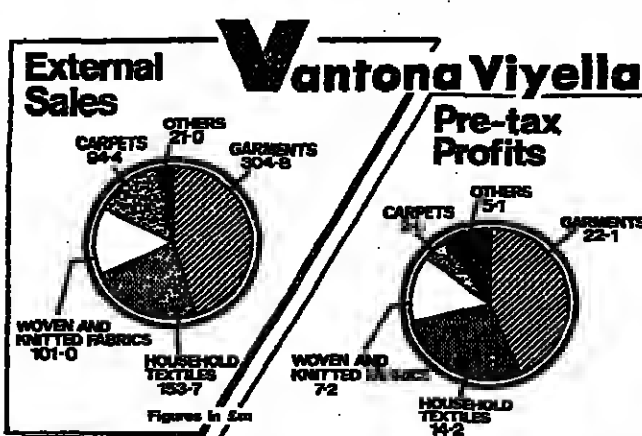
## Vantona celebrates merger with £52m profit

Vantona Viyella's results for the year to November 30 1985, announced yesterday along with the £12m capitalisation merger with Coats Patons, showed taxable profits up from £42.4m to £52.1m—above even the most optimistic City expectations.

Turnover was up from £506.9m to £674.9m, and better operating margins—up to just over 7 per cent from last year's 6.5 per cent—left pre-interest profits at £45.4m against £36.4m. Net interest added £1.8m (£0.3m).

All UK trading areas showed increased turnover and profits, with the largest proportional rise coming from the carpets division. Taxable profits here were doubled to £2.6m, consolidating the recovery this side has made since the disappointing results of last year. Carpets, household textiles and fabrics also turned in appreciable improvements in both turnover and profits.

The accounts include the contribution from Nottingham Manufacturing Company, acquired last summer, on a merger accounting basis as if it had been merged for the whole



year. Mr David Alliance, Vantona's chief executive, said that the integration of NMC had been achieved smoothly with significant benefits accruing in line with expectations. The enlarged group is promoting the joint use of the leading

brand names over a wide spectrum of merchandise. Only related companies saw their contribution to group profits decline, from £2.7m to £1.9m. This reflected the sale during 1984 of an NMC leasing company, resulting in improve-

ments in interest costs.

Mr Alliance said that relationships with the group's leading customers, of which Marks and Spencer is one, had been strengthened with co-operation on improvements in design input, generation of new ideas in products and marketing, and versatility in production giving rise to increased market share in many areas.

The improved results reflect the success in reducing unit costs as a result of on-going programmes of re-equipment, re-training and re-engineering undertaken during the last two and a half years, said Mr Alliance.

The total dividend is raised by 2p to 12p with a final of 8p (6p) on increased capital. This is covered 5.5 times by earnings per share of 41.9 compared with 30.1p, after a lower tax charge of £7.1m (£10.2m) and minorities unchanged at £1.8m.

Extraordinary charges were slightly higher at £4.6m against £4.1m, relating to costs incurred and provisions made for completion of reorganisation schemes

## COATS MERGER DETAILS

Under the terms of the agreed offer, Vantona Viyella will exchange ten new ordinary shares of 20p each for every 17 ordinary shares of 25p each in Coats Patons, other than the 10m (3.5 per cent) it already owns. There is a cash alternative of 238.24p per share.

Vantona said yesterday that the terms value each Coats share at 264.71p, representing a 78 per cent rise compared with the price before the announcement of the merger with Dawson International. The deal gives Coats an exit p/e of 12.6 times, said

commented prior to the NMC merger. After the ordinary dividend, which will account for £12.5m, the company transferred £26.2m (£16.7m) to reserves.

The balance sheet shows overall net liquidity improving from £54m to £74.6m, and gross

Vantona, and a 77 per cent premium over the value of Coats' net tangible assets at the end of 1984.

Accepting Coats' holders will be entitled to receive the 8p final dividend Vantona declared yesterday. Full acceptance of the share offer would result in Coats shareholders owning around 60 per cent of the enlarged group. Compared with the Dawson offer, and based on share prices at the close of business last Friday, Vantona said that the share offer meant a 33.55p increase, and the cash alternative a 12.91p rise.

gearing reduced from 13.4 per cent to 4.9 per cent. All UK term and secured borrowings have been eliminated, with the exception of quoted debentures and unsecured loan stocks of Carrington Viyella amounting to £9m.

See Lex

## Habitat seeks to clarify position on Debenhams

BY MARTIN DICKSON

THE DISPUTE between Burton Group and Sir Terence Conran's Habitat-Mothercare about the development of Debenhams, the department store chain, deepened yesterday when Habitat despatched a letter demanding an explanation of Burton's intentions towards it.

This followed weekend press statements by Burton that an agreement giving Habitat an option to take a 20 per cent equity stake in Debenhams was now void. It would also wish to take a fresh look at other agreements under which Habitat could rent up to 20 per cent of Debenhams' floor space and play a major role in redesigning the stores.

The agreements were reached last year when Sir Terence's newly formed Habitat was hotly contested, but ultimately successful, bid for Debenhams. However, last autumn Habitat agreed to merge with British Home Stores for £1.5bn, a deal that has turned it into a major high street rival of Burton.

Burton says that the deal has made it clear that the option could not be exercised if control of Habitat changed hands. Habitat shares have accounted for 45 per cent of the equity of the new combined group, called Storehouse.

However, Storehouse related yesterday that it still regarded the agreement as valid since many shareholders in Storehouse had previously held stakes in both BES and Habitat, which

could be interpreted as giving Habitat more than 50 per cent of the combined equity. Burton says that its legal advisers regard this as a tenuous argument.

Without the leverage of a right to equity, it could be difficult for Sir Terence to insist on space in Debenhams or a design role. These were only covered in a side letter specifying that the agreement was "without the creation of a legally enforceable commitment" on Burton's part.

Mr Ralph Halpern, chairman of Burton, is apparently prepared to negotiate about space, but only when there has been given some clearer idea of Sir Terence's plans for BES. He is anxious to avoid both BES and Debenhams putting Habitat goods into adjacent and competing sites, thus saturating the market and reducing Debenhams' potential for margin growth.

He was known by an article in a trade publication, quoting Sir Terence as calling on him to "pull his finger out" and quickly allocate Habitat space.

But Mr Terry Goddard, property director of Storehouse, said yesterday that Sir Terence's note of exasperation followed months of urging Burton to spell out its rental plans.

Storehouse argues that it cannot spell out its intentions towards Debenhams until Mr Halpern gives it an idea of where it is to be allocated space.

## Allied Arab Bank back in profit with £5.65m

BY MICHAEL CASSELL

Allied Arab Bank, the London consortium bank which in 1984 had to be rescued by its shareholders following heavy losses, last year recorded its first profits since 1982.

The bank yesterday reported pre-tax profits of £5.65m against losses of £3.45m in 1984. In the previous twelve months, it recorded a loss of £10m.

Allied Arab, in which Barclays Bank has a 20 per cent shareholding, underwent an emergency £41m recapitalisation exercise in December 1984 after incurring serious losses on loans to Esal, an Indian commodities group which was subsequently wound up in the High Court. New management was also brought in.

Last year's pre-tax figure was a £1.5m provision for sovereign debt, which the bank considers prudent in view of its international dealings and continuing economic uncertainty in parts of the world. There will be no dividend payment to shareholders.

Allied Arab, which had a

£32m balance sheet at the end

of 1985, holds a full UK banking licence. The majority shareholder is Sheikh Kamal Adham of Saudi Arabia. A further 26.5 per cent is held by Al-Tajer Bank, which belongs to Mr Mohamed Al-Tajer, the United Arab Emirates Ambassador in London. The chairman is Dr A. M. Hegazy, a former Prime Minister of Egypt.

Mr Colin Wakelin, the chief executive who is appointed by Barclays in 1984, said yesterday that 1985 had been a year of consolidation rather than significant growth but that the bank was a "strongly managed" and planned to "reinvest" in diversified areas.

Mr Wakelin said that the bank's strategy was to enable it to "become a larger business and it was considering acquisitions which would fit in with the existing business". The first acquisition, AAB Export Finance, now provides the bank with a further range of products.

## Automagic lifts profits

ASSUMING NORMAL retail conditions prevail in the final quarter, the directors of Automagic Holdings are confident of reporting much improved results. Profit for the interim period has risen to £183,900.

In the interim 26 weeks to April 28 1985 the group's sales have increased from £3.92m to £3.49m, and the directors say this encouraging trend has continued in the third quarter in both service and retail sections. £125,000, before an extraordinary debit of £21,000 this time, and tax of £54,000 (£56,000). Earnings are shown at 1.4p (1.2p) per share and the interim dividend is again 2p net.

## Paribas sells Mercury holding

BY MICHAEL CASSELL, PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

Paribas, the French state-owned banking group, has sold its 6.5 per cent stake in Mercury Securities, the UK merchant banking group.

Paribas has held its stake in Mercury since 1974 and had an understanding with the UK group that it would only dispose of its interest after consultation with Mercury.

Mr David Scholey, chairman of Mercury, said yesterday that the French bank had discussed the sale of its interest and that the French bank had discussed the sale of its interest and that the shareholding had been placed

with "two or three" long-term

investors. He emphasised that Mercury and Paribas continued to enjoy "a very close relationship." Lord Roll, joint chairman of S. G. Warburg, will continue as a director of Banque Paribas and Mr Jean-Yves Haberer, Paribas president, remains a director of Warburg.

The Paribas stake represents the last element of what was once an extensive cross-participation between the two groups, but which was largely unwound about four years ago. At one stage, Paribas held 25

per cent of Warburg, with Mercury holding around 12.5 per

cent of Paribas France, a similar percentage interest in Paribas Switzerland and about 10 per cent of Paribas Holland. Mr Saul Steinberg, the US financier who has an 11.3 per cent stake in Mercury, is not among the purchasers of the 6.5 per cent Paribas interest.

Mr Steinberg's shareholding will fall to around 8 per cent after Mercury's April merger with Rowe and Pitman and Mullens and Co, the two stock-broking firms, and Akroyd and Smithers, the jobbers.

## Severance costs drag Manchester Ship into red

HIT BY severance costs of £4m, Manchester Ship Company, port operators, suffered taxable losses of £1.94m for 1985, compared with profits last time of £1.68m.

Severance costs—there were only £605,000 in 1984—were very high, directors say, with numbers falling by 250 to under 1,200 by the end of 1985.

The directors state that the future role of the upper canal is still under review and the need for outside assistance is becoming more generally recognised.

After tax of £31,000 (£43,000) and £54,000 (£133,000) set aside for the redemption of loan capital, losses per £1 share are given as 52.5p. These are compared with earnings of 26.3p. The dividend, however, is lifted to 6p, against 5.5p, and there is a special centenary payment of 5p.

The directors say that the group's port incurred a loss of

£1.6m for the year, which

occurred in the first six months—it broke even in the second half. Income rose slightly and costs, especially labour costs, were reduced.

Losses of £2m in the upper reaches continue to depress the overall port result, directors say.

Group turnover for the 12 months declined from £23.06m to £21.15m from which there was an operating loss of £1.5m. Compared with profits of £150,000, interest payments were little changed at £305,000 (£278,000), but property income was boosted from £157m to £23.7m, an loan and investment income increased to £1.06m, against £813,000.

Property income included a

£1.5m surplus from the sale of land, and a loan and investment income increased to £1.06m, against £813,000.

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## C H Bailey reveals loss of £494,000 for half-year

C. H. Bailey, the controversial ship repairer and engineer criticised by the Stock Exchange for failing to produce interim figures, has broken with tradition by publishing results for the 26 weeks to October 11, 1985.

These show losses before tax of £494,000 on turnover of £5.54m. This compares with a loss of £97,000 for the full year to March 29 1985 when there was an exceptional income of £301,000 from a rates refund.

The loss attributable to shareholders amounts to £238,000 against a profit in the last full year of £241,000. The loss per share is 0.69p against earnings

for the full year of 0.4p.

During 1985 the company reduced its holding in Bristol Channel Ship Repairs from 67 per cent to 50.2 per cent. The company also holds various foreign investments and owns a hotel in Malta.

Tifa AG, the Liechtenstein-based company controlled by Mr David Mitchell, has again increased its holding in Bristol Channel Ship Repairs from just under 11 per cent to 12.13 per cent.

There has been speculation that C. H. Bailey may sell part of its stake to Mr Mitchell, who also holds about 28 per cent of C. H. Bailey itself.

## COMPANY NEWS IN BRIEF

## RESULTS

**THROGMORTON TRUST:** On earnings up from 7.6p to 8.36p per share in the year ended November 30 1985, the Throgmorton Trust is lifting its dividend from 7.5p to 8.35p net. The final is 5.6p. Over the 12 months the net asset value had risen from 265.4p to 327.8p after prior charges of 6p. By the end of December, however, it had slipped to 325.31p, and to 323.44p taking prior charges at market value. Gross revenue for the year rose from £8.98m to £10.68m and comprised franked dividends £3.94m (£3.2m), unfranked dividends £2.24m (£2.22m), dividend from unconsolidated subsidiaries £300,000 (£122,000), interest £2.95m (£1.54m), underwriting commission £220,000 (£60,000), and net profit of dealing subsidiary £23,000 (£148,000).

**AFRICAN LAKES:** Advertisers in its overseas operations have its results in 1985, and have offset considerable improvement made in the UK. For the year turnover rose by £3.81m to £17.55m, but the pre-tax profit fell from

£128m to £510,000. The dividend is held at 1.5p net per share on capital increased by the 1-for-5 scrip, giving a rise of 0.5p. In Malawi profits were cut because of heavy exchange losses, higher interest charges and reduced margins. Substantial losses on mining subsidiary affected results in Zimbabwe. Losses from Ethiopia increased although they were not significant.

**PREES TOOLS:** Taxable profits increased from £128,000 to £182,000 for the six months ended October 31 1985 from turnover of £2.11m (£1.98m). After tax of £50,000 (same) earnings per 10p share are given as 6.3p (3.5p) while the interim dividend is 1p (0.9p). Last year's final payment was 1.75p.

## BIDS AND DEALS

**PRESIDENT ENTERTAINMENT:** Sales and marketing director Mr Peter Ducker, has resigned from the USM-quoted theatre restaurant group after just over four months. Mr Robert Earl, chairman, said Mr Ducker, who joined President from a London hotel group, wanted to return to the hotel business. No compensation will

be paid and there are no plans to appoint another director to this position.

**PETROFINA's** offer for Charterhouse Petroleum has been declared unconditional following acceptance having been received in respect of 128,056 shares (£2.87 per cent). With the 1.23 per cent stake it already holds and the 6.3 per cent stake held by its financial advisors, Hill Samuel, which has accepted the offer, Petrofinas owns or has acceptances for 94.12 per cent of the capital.

**NICHOLS (Vintex),** the soft drinks manufacturer, has agreed to buy Cabana (Holdings), another soft drinks manufacturer, for £3.5m, plus a further payment related to turnover of up to £400,000. The purchase also includes an outstanding warrant to subscribe for shares in Cabana which has a pre-tax profit of £343,207 in the year to January 31, 1985 and has warranted pre-tax profits of not less than £400,000 (excluding extraordinary) in the year just ended.

**TIFPROOK,** the container and trailer rental company, announced the agreed acquisition of PNO Trailer Leasing, a private Danish company for £3.2m. The deal will be paid for through a vendor placing of £37,425 shares at 187p per share. PNO's pre-tax profit in the year to April 30 1985 was £230,000.

**PRESTWICH HOLDINGS,** the Manchester-based engineering company, is in discussions with CooperVision, the large US eyecare group, about the possible sale of Hemleys Optical, Prestwich's chain of 44 opticians, most of which are in North-west England. Last year Hemleys provided about 35 per cent of Prestwich's £874,000 pre-tax profits. CooperVision last month agreed an £8.25m takeover of R. Kelvin Watson, another Manchester-based optician.

**Barkeley Exploration** and Production Exploration have taken up about 23.2 per cent of an offer for sale of shares in the company's purchase from Texaco of a stake in the Forties Field. The balance was conditionally placed at the time the transaction was originally announced.

**FRONTAPRINT,** the instant print chain, has taken a 30 per cent stake in Zippy Print of Canada for £247,000 (£255,000). The Canadian company has 23 outlets and plans to open five more by the end of 1986.

This advertisement is not an offer to sell nor a solicitation of an offer to buy these securities. The offering is made only by the Prospectus.

## NEW ISSUE

1,200,000 Shares



COMMON STOCK

Price \$9 Per Share

Copies of the Prospectus may be obtained from any of the several Underwriters only in such states in which such Underwriters are qualified to act as dealers in securities and in which the Prospectus may be legally distributed.

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February 6, 1986

JBcoB

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GRAND CAYMAN

## DIVIDEND ANNOUNCEMENT

On 5th February, 1986 the Directors declared a dividend of D-Mark 20.00 per share payable on 14th March, 1986 on all Participating Shares then in issue. Holders of bearer shares should present coupon No. 1 on or after 14th March, 1986 at the office of the Administrator Julius Baer Bank and Trust Company Limited, Butterfield House, Grand Cayman, B.W.I., or at the main office of the Agent, Bank Julius Baer & Co. Ltd., Bahnhofstrasse 36, 8001 Zurich, Switzerland.

By order of the Board  
D-Mark-Baer, Julius Baer  
D-Mark Bond Fund Ltd.

February 6, 1986

JBcoB

DOLLAR-BAER • JULIUS BAER U.S. DOLLAR BOND FUND LTD.  
GRAND CAYMAN

## DIVIDEND ANNOUNCEMENT

On 5th February, 1986 the Directors declared a dividend of US-Dollars 30.00 per share payable on 14th March, 1986 on all Participating Shares then in issue. Holders of bearer shares should present coupon No. 1 on or after 14th March, 1986 at the office of the Administrator Julius Baer Bank and Trust Company Limited, Butterfield House, Grand Cayman, B.W.I., or at the main office of the Agent, Bank Julius Baer & Co. Ltd., Bahnhofstrasse 36, 8001 Zurich, Switzerland.

By order of the Board  
Dollar-Baer, Julius Baer  
U.S. Dollar Bond Fund Ltd.

February 6, 1986

Granville & Co. Limited

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## Over-the-Counter Market

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Gross Yield	P/E	Fully
					div. (%)	% Annual	Adjusted
146	116	Ass. Brit. Ind. CULS	129	+ 2	7.5	7.2	7.1
76	43	Ass. Brit. Ind. CULS	76	+ 2	10.0	7.0	7.1
46	33	Armata and Rhodes	36	—	8.4	8.1	11.7
106	61	Baldon Hill	106	—	4.3	2.4	8.2
64	42	Bry Technology	55	—	4.0	2.4	21.2
201	136	CCL Ordinary	137	—	3.9	7.0	6.5
112	57	Deborah Service	58	—	8.8	8.8	1.1
135	90	Carburendum Ord.	91	—	18.7	18.0	—
94	63	Carburendum 7.5p Pf.	64	—	10.7	11.6	6.7
85	57	Deborah Service	57	—	7.0	12.3	6.3
22	20	Frederick Parker Group	21	—	—	—	—
82	50	George Blair	52	—	—	—	3.8
216	163	Isir Group	163	+ 1	3.0	4.5	17.4
122	101	Jackson Group	121	+ 2	15.0	9.2	12.8
316	223	James Burrough	318	+ 2	15.0	4.7	10.0
58	46	James Burrough	59	—	—	—	—
85	64	John Howard and Co.	64	—	12.8	14.2	—
85	57	Miniature Holding NV	58	—	6.9	0.8	36.6
82	51	Robert Alexander	52	—	—	—	—
34	35	Scruttons A	36	+ 1	—	—	3.8
370	320	Trevlin and Carls	320	—	5.0	7.5	6.1
42	25	Unilock Holdings	41	—	4.3	1.3	18.5
112	57	Walter Alexander	112	—	8.8	6.5	7.5
228	185	W. R. Yates	200	—	17.4	8.7	6.7



# BEFORE YOU CONSIDER ARGYLL AND DISTILLERS, TAKE A LOOK AT ARGYLL AND DISTILLERIES.



LOCH LOMOND, SPRING 1985



GLEN SCOTIA, SUMMER 1983



LITTLE MILL, SPRING 1985

Compare the words of the Argyll Group of Companies with those of Guinness PLC on their respective commitment to Scotch whisky.

Argyll: "In March 1985 the Loch Lomond Distillery, together with certain Scotch whisky stocks, were sold to Inver House Distillers Ltd for a total consideration of £6.9 million. The sale reflected a policy decision to reduce investment in Scotch whisky production." (Source: Argyll Annual Report, August 1985.)

Ernest Saunders, Chief Executive of Guinness: "Scotland is the home of whisky and we must do everything in our power to ensure that the life blood of this vital export industry is not damaged." (Source: Guinness Press Release, February 4th 1986.)

## GUINNESS PLC

Guinness and Distillers. A stroke of genius.



## UK COMPANY NEWS

# Imperial launches attack on Hanson's US record

BY MARTIN DICKSON

Imperial Group, the tobacco, brewing and leisure group, fighting a £1.3bn takeover bid from Hanson Trust, yesterday launched a scathing attack on Hanson's record in the US and its capital investment programme.

In a letter to shareholders it argued that, company by company, the performance of Hanson's US operations was very poor.

However, Hanson hit back last night saying that Imperial's arguments were based on an insufficiently close examination of its accounts. It added that capital investment policy was to only put money where it would give a good return for shareholders.

The new clash comes as the Government is weighing up a confidential report by the Office of Fair Trading on whether or not the Hanson bid for Imperial, and Imperial's rival plan for a merger with United Biscuits, should be referred to the Monopolies Commission.

The OFT has taken an



Lord Hanson, chairman of Hanson Trust

unusually long time submitting its report. Today is the 39th day of the Hanson bid, which is normally the last day under the Takeover Code that a defending company can issue trading information such as profit and

dividend forecasts. However, Imperial is understood to have received dispensation from the Takeover Panel to breach this rule.

Yesterday's Imperial document said that Hanson's US operations provided 47 per cent of its operating profits last year and were vital to the group's future prospects.

However, it went on, 86 per cent of its US profits increase between 1980 and 1985 were "bought in" through acquisition, a further 3 per cent represented exchange rate changes and only 6 per cent came from organic growth, falling far short of inflation.

Imperial added that in the past five years Hanson had materially reduced its rate of capital expenditure, both as a proportion of sales and in relation to depreciation. This, it said, contrasted sharply with Imperial's rapid growth.

In 1985 Imperial had spent £183m on capital expenditure in its three main divisions—4.5 per cent of sales, dwarfing Hanson's £88m or 2.2 per cent of sales.

# Diploma takes £7m stake in W. German electronics group

BY LIONEL BARBER

Diploma, the electronics and building components concern, has acquired a 22 per cent stake in Electronics Vertrieb AG, a West German electronics distributor, in a deal worth £7.4m.

Diploma also has an option to increase its stake to 37.6 per cent next year at a cost of £3.78m, bringing the total cost of the deal to just over £11m.

The initial purchase of the 22 per cent stake in Electronic 2000 has been satisfied by the placing of 2.8m new shares in Diploma at 265p per share, representing 5.1 per cent of the enlarged share capital.

Electronic 2000 is one of the three largest West German semiconductor distributors. The

group experienced a difficult year in 1985, with likely pre-tax profits of DM 12.8m, compared with DM 14.1m.

Diploma, however, reckons the deal brings it a stake in a similar type of firm operating in the largest electronics market in Europe with the best prospects.

Last year, Electronic 2000 acquired another West German electronic distributor which made pre-tax profits of DM 6.25m and had net assets of DM 2.64m for an issue of 2.5m shares.

Diploma achieved pre-tax profits of £55.5m turnover for the year ending September 30 1985, a drop of \$0.8m on the previous year. Part of the fall was due to the difficulties in the cyclical semiconductor market.

Diploma closed at 270p, unchanged on the day.

# McCorquodale set to buy specialist packaging group

BY DAVID GOODHART

McCorquodale, the printing and packaging group which last December abandoned a £12.2m bid for fellow printer Richard Clay, is on the point of clinching a new takeover.

Discussions have been continuing for some weeks with the Wilkinson Sword Group, part of the US company Allegheny International, about the possible purchase of E. W. Chapman, a specialist packaging business which is an independent division of Wilkinson Sword.

Chapman has three production units based in Wellingborough and employs about 250 people. It specialises in printed

cartons for the food, household goods and pharmaceuticals industries. It also acts as a wholesaler or packaging materials.

In the year to September 30 1985 McCorquodale recorded profits of £10.2m on turnover of £180.2m. The company's offer for Clay was first referred to the Monopolies Commission at the end of last year and then St. Ives, the magazine printer, came in with a £18.8m offer. Subsequently McCorquodale pulled out complaining that the Department of Trade and Industry had not allowed it to re-enter the fray with St. Ives for a crucial two weeks after the improved offer was made.

Costain Holdings Inc, a US subsidiary of Costain engaged mainly in the mining and marketing of coal, has signed a letter of intent to buy the company from Nicor Inc. Miners' Ventures is managing partner in a joint venture development of a coal mine and processing plant in Montana. It also has silica interests and some small gold reserves.

# Bell has 11% stake in Morgan Crucible

Mr Robert Holmes à Court's Bell Group has become the largest single shareholder in Morgan Crucible, the materials technology company, with an 11.2 per cent stake.

Perth-based Bell has spent an estimated £16.5m in acquiring its holding in Crucible over the last six months. The first public report of a stake held by the Australian company was in late January when Bell said it held 7.1 per cent.

Crucible, whose £48m agreed bid for First Castle Electronics is due to close on February 15, says that the UK arm of Mr Holmes à Court's group had been keeping in touch with the company.

"They say the stake is just an investment and we feel very relaxed about it," said Mr Irvine Simpson, Crucible's managing director.

Last night Crucible's shares closed at 246p, up 4p, only 1p below the 1985-86 high.

# Costain US acquisition

Costain Group, the contracting and mining company, is to buy Nicor Mineral Ventures, a Denver-based company with talc and silica mining interests.

Costain said this was an important strategic step in its expansion into the recovery and processing of minerals, though the deal was worth much less than 5 per cent of its net worth of about £240m.

Costain Holdings Inc, a US subsidiary of Costain engaged mainly in the mining and marketing of coal, has signed a letter of intent to buy the company from Nicor Inc. Miners' Ventures is managing partner in a joint venture development of a coal mine and processing plant in Montana. It also has silica interests and some small gold reserves.

# Unilever buys in US

UNILEVER, the Anglo-Dutch consumer products group, has bought J. H. Filbert, a US producer and distributor of margarine, mayonnaise and salad-related products, from Central Soya Co.

Filbert, based in Baltimore, Maryland, will become part of Lever Brothers, and will expand Unilever's range of margarine in the US.

It is the second US margarine company to be bought by Unilever, following the purchase of Shedd Food Products from Bestrice Foods in February 1984.

# DIVIDENDS ANNOUNCED

	Current payment	Date of payment	Total dividend	Total last year
Automagic Holdings	2	March 26	2	5.6
Access Satellite	1.2	March 26	1.2	3
George Dew	3.7	March 26	3.7	5.7
Draxton Far East	0.7	April 1	0.7	1.1
European Assets	0.06	May 30	0.06	0.1
Manchester Ship	11	—	5.5	11
Press Tools	1	—	0.9	2.65
Varexona Virella	1	July 1	6	12
Dividends shown pence per share except where otherwise stated.				
Equivalent after allowing for scrip issue.				
Increased by rights and/or acquisition issues.				
USM stock.				
Unquoted stock.				
Dutch florins throughout.				

# Norwich Union supports Guinness bid for Distillers

BY DAVID GOODHART

Norwich Union, one of the largest shareholders in Distillers with about 2 per cent, has told Guinness that it is supporting its bid for the spirits company despite being one of the institutions which has publicly queried the unusual underwriting deal between Guinness and Distillers.

Mr David Barker, the chief investment manager at Norwich, has made it clear that he was not consulted by Argyle—the rival bidder for Distillers—before the supermarkets group decided to seek a High Court writ over the underwriting deal last week.

While stressing that Norwich was "reluctantly released" about the Distillers' underwriting arrangements he also said that he would not like to see it becoming a trend. The idea of the courts "white knight" it caught on could lead to a lot

of irresponsible deals," he said. Argyle, meanwhile, is stressing that any significant increase to the last Guinness offer to top the current Argyle one would lead to serious dilution for Guinness shareholders.

Mr Rupert Faura Walker, of Samuel Montagu, Argyle's merchant bank, said yesterday that assuming a new £250 cash offer by Guinness the dilution would increase from the present 11 per cent to over 20 per cent.

Guinness's share price picked up 7p to close at 285p yesterday having fallen sharply on Friday. Distillers fell 8p to close at 612p and Argyle rose 4p to finish at 342p.

Argyle said yesterday that, with others acting with it, the company now holds 14.5m Distillers shares, or 3.65 per cent.

# Wm. Ransom up 30% but margins under pressure

AN UPSURGE in demand brought about by the limited list prescribing regulations gave manufacturing chemist William Ransom & Sons a near-30 per cent profit boost at the six month stage.

The directors say sales are continuing on a buoyant note although intensive competition is making an impact on margins.

They add that sterling, which was strong until recently, and the costs incurred at Malak Pharmaceuticals, the recent acquired subsidiary, are also

having an effect on the group's profitability.

The opening half year (to September 30 1985) saw profits rise from £172,000 to £225,000. Meanwhile, they are lifting the interim dividend from 1.65p to 1.82p net per 10p share.

Earnings for the first half emerged at 5.8p compared with 4.37p, after tax of £88,000 against a previous £77,000.

# Country Gardens calls for £3m under BES

Country Gardens is asking investors for £3m under the Business Expansion Scheme in order to develop its established garden centres and to open new ones.

To cut costs the company is effectively sponsoring its own issue of up to 4m shares at 75p each—but investors will deposit their money with Country Gardens' custodian trust, the Alliance Assurance Company.

The company began trading 12 months ago after raising £1.5m in a launch capital through a Business Expansion Scheme. It now operates two garden centres, in Cirencester and near Didcot. Each is structured according to the concept of the American shopping mall as a centre of activity to attract gardening non-specialists as well as aficionados.

Should the issue be successful Country Gardens plans to expand its existing centres and to develop new sites. The management has already found one suitable site, in Surrey.

The issue has already opened and will close on March 17, therefore investors can claim tax relief in either the current or the coming fiscal year.

The Country Gardens issue is just one in the raft of Business Expansion Schemes timed to emerge before the end of the 1985/86 financial year. Among the other schemes announced is Leisure, which encompasses an hotel, snooker halls and a golf centre—aims to raise just over £1m by issuing up to 4.2m shares at 25p each. The issue, which is sponsored by Guidehouse, has opened and will close on March 5 thereby accommodating both the 1985/86 and 1986/87 fiscal years.

# BOARD MEETINGS

TODAY	FUTURE DATES
Intertec: Amsted Consumer Electronics, Genol Investments, Mangrove Group, Our Price, Stonehill, United.	
Finale: AGA, Burnetts, Consolidated Co, Suttons, Mins, D. J. Security, Scottish Agricultural Investment Trust, Griguard West Diamond Mining, Vantage Securities.	
Interim:	
CVO	Mar 10
Dale Electronic International	Mar 20
Delema	Mar 20
YR City of London Trust	Mar 20
YR Products	Mar 20
Finale:	
Alexanders Holdings	Feb 18
C. S. C. Investment Trust	Feb 18
Croftbrook Electronics	Feb 18
Midland Bank	Feb 18
Pacific Assets Trust	Feb 18
Quick (H. & J.)	Feb 18
Renown Inc.	Feb 21
Scottish Agricultural Investment Trust	Feb 18
Updown Investments	Feb 18

Amended

# We'd like to get on first name terms.

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We merely wish to become the first name that springs to mind when you're considering anything to do with offices, shops, or industrial and high-technology buildings.

Anything, did we say? Yes, more or less.

We're aware that's rather a large claim.

However, we are rather a large practice. (We've eighty-five partners and associates, and over five hundred staff in the UK alone.)

And we didn't get big by turning down small jobs.

In the past year, for example, we've handled instructions on units ranging in size from 400 square feet up. Admittedly, the largest is over 1.5 million square feet, and it's true that much of our work is extremely large.

As a matter of fact we think our size adds perspective to our experience and skills.

Big can be beautiful too, you know.

We'd like to put those skills at your service. And, to begin with, we invite you to have a copy of our personal directory.

It will guide you to the person you need.

Of course, who you need depends on what you want. So let's run through what we do.

Our investment people handle buying and selling, and the funding of property development. We work for owners, occupiers, and, of course, investors.

Our agency teams cover, amongst other things, developing, letting and acquiring, as well as rent reviews and lease renewals.

And whether you're buying or selling, occupying or investing, be it office or factory, farm or fenland, almost anywhere in the world, our valuations group can tell you what it's worth.



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In these days of 'intelligent buildings' you need highly intelligent advice on management, maintenance and the improvement of property. We'll take care of everything, from the security of your buildings, to the security of your investment.

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They're the sort of questions our databank can answer. It's one of the largest sources of commercial property information. It enables us to give soundly based advice, which is one reason why we act as consultants to many clients.

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Whether you're at home or abroad, large or small, we're at your service.

If you'd like to know anything else, please call us on 01-493 6040.

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# ELECTRON HOUSE PLC

(Registered in England under the Companies Acts 1948 to 1981 No. 1723922).

Authorised	Present Issued and fully paid	Prospective Issued and fully paid
£1,350,000	Ordinary Shares of 10p each	£593,035
£3,000,000	6.5 per cent Convertible Cumulative Redeemable Preference Shares of £1 each	£2,635,710
£4,350,000		£593,035
		£3,492,316

Electron House PLC ("the Company") has agreed to acquire the whole of the issued share capital and inter-company debts of VSI Electronics (UK) Limited, VSI Electronics (Australia) Pty Limited, VSI Electronics (NZ) Limited and Pacesetter Electronics Inc. ("the Pacesetter Group") which are all franchised distributors of electronic components, for the initial sum of US\$7.7 million.

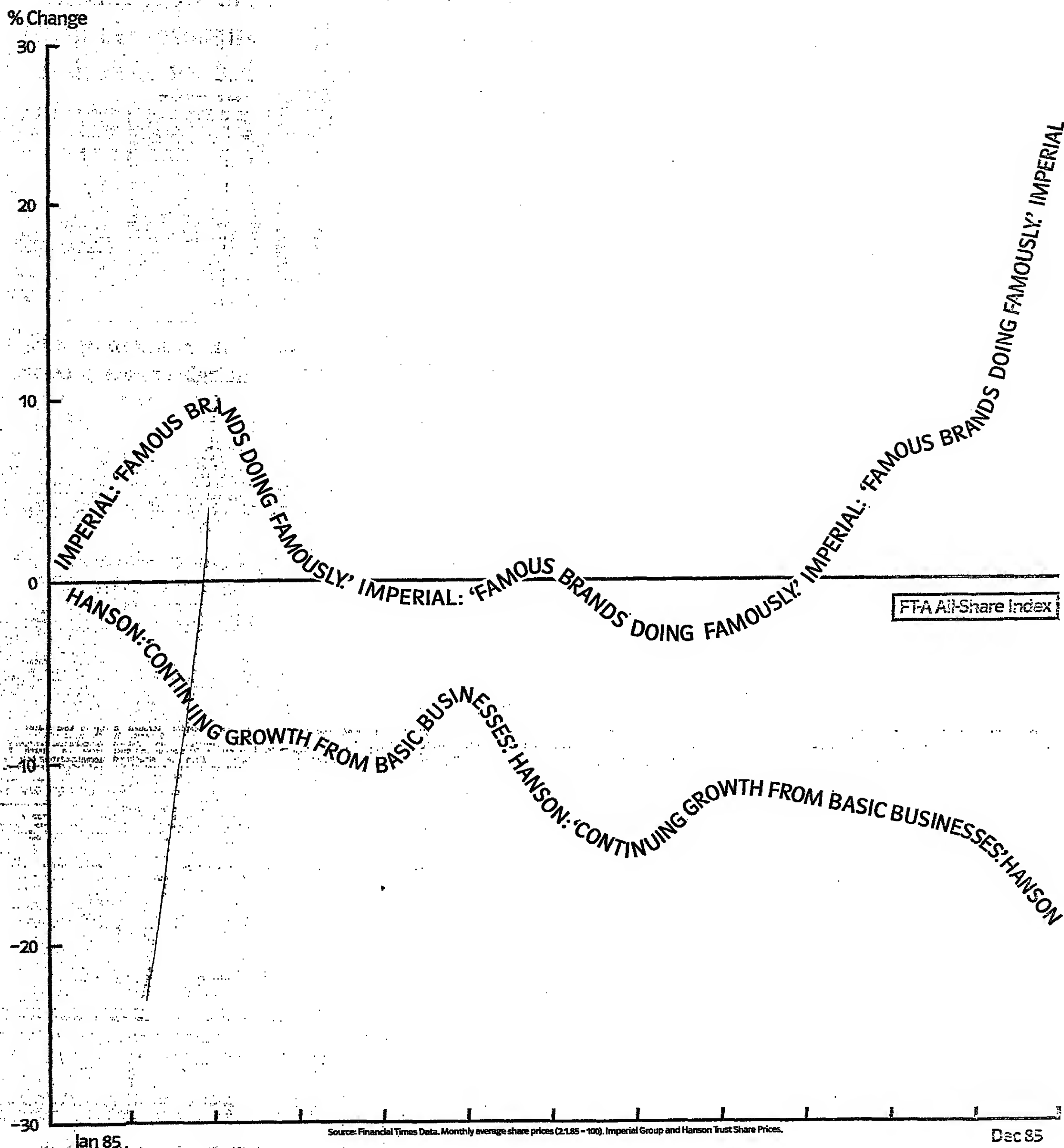
In order to finance the consideration payable for the acquisition of the Pacesetter Group the Company is making a Rights Issue of 2,635,710 Rights units (each comprising one new Ordinary Share and one Preference Share). The Rights units will be provisionally allotted on the basis of four Rights units for every nine existing Ordinary Shares of 10p each of the Company for a price of 207p per unit payable in full on acceptance by 7th March, 1986. Laurie, Milbank & Co. have placed 1,144,220 fully paid Rights units.

Particulars relating to Electron House PLC are available in the Extel Unlisted Securities Market Service. Copies may be obtained during normal business hours on any weekday (Saturdays excepted) until 3rd March, 1986 from—

LAURIE, MILBANK & CO.  
Portland House 72/73 Basinghall Street  
LONDON EC2V 5DP

11th February, 1986





You may have wondered why Hanson's share price so dramatically underperformed the market in 1985.

Could it be that investors have come to realise that Hanson's growth is dependent on successively larger acquisitions?

That 77% of its companies are operating in declining industries?

That the current trading performance of

most Hanson companies is at best pedestrian?

That Hanson plans to issue another massive amount of convertible to take over Imperial?

That this would result in Hanson convertible accounting for nearly a third of all UK convertible issues?

Or is there something else we don't know?



The sources for the information contained in this advertisement are set out or referred to in the letter from the Chairman, Imperial Group plc to shareholders dated 16th January 1986. The directors of Imperial Group plc (including those who have delegated detailed supervision of this advertisement) have taken all reasonable care to ensure that the facts stated and opinions expressed are fair and accurate. The directors accepted responsibility accordingly.











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## COMMODITIES AND AGRICULTURE

## 'Last chance' for cocoa agreement

BY WILLIAM DUFFLORCE IN GENOVA

COCOA EXPORTING and importing countries have their last chance over the next three weeks to agree on a new International Cocoa Agreement, Mr Rene Montes, chairman of the United Nations Cocoa Conference, warned here yesterday.

Delegates and observers from some 70 countries were starting their fourth attempt since 1984 to work out a replacement for the current price-stabilising agreement which expires at the end of September.

Previous negotiations between cocoa producers and consumers have broken down over two key issues: the price level and the mechanism for adjusting prices.

Mr Montes said yesterday his preliminary report indicated that both sides had shifted their positions on the price

level since the conference adjourned last March.

Producers who had previously sought a median price of 120 cents a pound were now talking of 115 or even 110 cents. Consumers had lowered their median price target from 105 to 100 cents.

The figures compare with average daily prices of 109.4 cents for 1983-84 and 100.8 for 1984-85 calculated by the secretariat of the International Cocoa Organisation.

The gap between producers and consumers over price remains wide but Mr Montes said he had found both sides ready to negotiate.

On price adjustment Mr Amadou Traore of the Ivory Coast urged consuming coun-

tries to drop their demand for semi-automatic revision of prices during the year following market and currency fluctuations. This would be a fair response from the consumers to the producers' agreement to abandon their ideas for a quota system, Mr Traore suggested.

The Ivory Coast, currently the largest producer of cocoa beans, refused to join the current agreement when it was negotiated in 1980, because it wanted the agreement to provide for greater predictability in prices and earnings.

Mr Richard Thomas of the UK, the consumers' spokesman, said no more in his opening statement than that consumers would work as constructively as possible for an agreement which

would mutually benefit both sides. The outlook for the cocoa negotiations in Geneva has been dimmed by the crisis in the tin market and growing doubts about the value of international commodity agreements in general. But Mr Montes insisted yesterday that there was no reason why recent experiences in tin should affect cocoa.

An essential difference was that the cocoa agreement did not allow the forward buying which had proved to be so fatal in operating the tin buffer stock, Mr Montes said.

Producers and consumers held separate caucus meetings yesterday and the conference will divide into committees today. February 28 is the deadline for achieving agreement.

## Peruvian copper workers call off strike

WORKERS at Peru's leading copper producer, Southern Peru Copper Corporation, ended their strike and returned to work yesterday morning, reports Reuters from New York.

SPCC's 6,000 workers struck on January 27 over a pay demand. The company said workers have now accepted a two-year resolution issued by the Labour Ministry which had intervened in the dispute. He had no further details.

Total non-Communist world stocks of all forms of aluminium excluding finished end products were 3,959m tonnes in December.

Primary metal stocks were 2,184m tonnes against 2,218m and 2,594m respectively.

## LONDON METAL EXCHANGE WAREHOUSE STOCKS

(Changes during week ending last Friday) (tonnes)

Aluminium	-3,775 to 210,000
Copper	-2,790 to 17,725
Lead	-2,775 to 65,600
Nickel	-114 to 4,402
Tin	-25 to 65,600
Zinc	+1,000 to 40,375

(cwt)

Silver	+1,008,000 to 44,456,000
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## MMB hits back at dairy trade

BY ANDREW GOWERS

THE MILK Marketing Board, the English and Welsh dairy farmer co-operative, yesterday hit back at independent dairy companies with a detailed rejection of their calls for the lifting of its commercial arm and for further rationalisation of its manufacturing capacity.

Sir Steve Roberts, the MMB chairman, told a Press conference that the board's position was that it would not reduce competition in the dairy industry, rather

than enlivening it as the dairy companies suggest. He reiterated the MMB's assertion that the commercial operations were not for sale.

He also said that Dairy Crest had taken "immense steps" to rationalise its processing plants, with the closure of five cheese factories and the moth-balling of 20 per cent of its butter manufacturing capacity.

"The private trade has done nothing but talk about the need (for rationalisation) and the

benefits they envisage for the producer," he said. "It is time for them to get their house in order. For a start, what about overcapacity?"

Sir Steve's comments marked the latest shot in what is becoming an increasingly acrimonious public dispute between the MMB and private dairy companies such as Express, Unigate and Northern Foods.

## Slow start for new futures contracts

BY OUR COMMODITIES EDITOR

THE LATEST additions to London's family of futures contracts got off to a slow start yesterday.

The Baltic International Freight Futures Exchange's (Biffex) tanker freight futures contract—the first instrument of its kind, introduced to supplement the existing dry cargo contract—traded 121 lots on its first day. Meanwhile, volume in another new contract on the Baltic Exchange, in early potatoes,

totalled only 21 lots.

Introduction of the tanker freight and early potatoes contracts followed the launch last Friday of a contract in beef futures, designed to supplement the Baltic markets in pigmeat and live pigs. That had a reasonably busy first day, trading 235 lots, but volume dropped yesterday to 56 lots.

Biffex traders appeared not to be surprised by the slow first day in tanker freight

futures, which came against a background of deep uncertainty in the oil market. The tanker market, however, has been well below the current level of the Baltic Tanker Index, reflecting expectations that oil prices—and with them, tanker rates—are set to fall further.

However, there was some scepticism about the market fall yesterday was overdone, and that tanker rates would eventually pick up in response to a rise in oil stockpiling.

## EEC price package angers farm unions

BY IVO DAWNAY IN BRUSSELS

Disunity is Strength—that could be the motto of European farmers' unions as once again they get about as united as the stars in the EEC farm price package.

Ostensibly, the farmers' representatives are at one in their condemnation of the plan that broadly requires a freeze on national price increases that are paid for most products and a 3 per cent tax on cereals output.

Copa, the unions' umbrella body, lambasted the programme within hours of its publication, claiming that real falls in farmers' incomes demanded average price rises of at least 4.7 per cent. The outline scheme, it said, meant that for some cereals farmers' incomes would fall by as much as 15 per cent.

Concluding with a shopping list of demands, Copa called for proposals on everything from socio-structural measures, to new action in less favoured areas, the

environment, biotechnology, alternative technology and community preference. In other words, more cash and lots of it.

To this extent, at least, the unions are in agreement. But privately all are aware that defining Utopia is not the task in hand. When the issues are taken point by point, national divisions swiftly emerge.

At one extreme are the French—the ultimate rejectionist front—which is committed to nothing less than a Fortress Europe farm policy, ready to bar imports and launch an aggressive export drive regardless of the ramifications for international trade.

The FNSEA, the main French union, will accept the co-responsibility levy on cereals, but only combined with strict measures against imported animal feed and moves such as a tax on vegetable oils. The alternative it argues is an end to the Common Agricultural Policy and the renationalisation of

the CAP into protective national policies.

"It is a straightforward political choice," one official said yesterday.

Others—the West German farmers' union—are not quite so militant or so gloomy. The German DBV is believed to secretly favour a policy of quotas for grains as the most equitable solution, a move strongly opposed by the French.

It also argues that the restructuring of support in favour of smaller farmers should alleviate the problems of farm incomes that in part motivated the CAP's creation and formed a major theme of last summer's Green Paper.

However, such a move would create bitterness in a British NFU, where officials argue their more efficient farmers should not be penalised by institutionalised Luddism.

From a Mediterranean perspective, the debate has started at a tangent. Why, the Italians and Greeks argue, should their farmers pay for price cuts for fruit and vegetables

when haemorrhaging spending is dominated by claims for a 10 per cent increase in products such as dairy, grains and beef?

How then can these widely divergent views give farmers a powerful voice in the forthcoming negotiations? The answer lies in the political muscle they wield at home. In a year that promises crucial national and regional elections in France, the Netherlands and West Germany, the farmers' union on their ministers to adopt a strongly nationalistic line in the talks.

The nature of the farm debate and the intricacies of the trade-offs that it entails mean disunity is a spur to a less restrictive package. A concession to the German wheat farmers must in turn trigger a parallel improvement in the terms on offer, for example, to an Italian tomato grower.

Right now, the fraternal message shared by farmers' organisations is: "You twist your minister's arm, and I'll twist mine."

## British fears confirmed

## FARMER'S VIEWPOINT

By John Cherrington



THE PROPOSALS for 1986-87 EEC farm price support arrangements announced by the European Commission last week are much in line with the leaks that preceded them and have, as expected, been widely attacked by British National Farmers' Union and by the Minister of Agriculture, for being discriminatory against UK farmers.

The proposals have aroused the bitterest complaints have been those which seem to favour the smaller Continental farmer. Exemption from the co-responsibility levy for the first 25 tonnes of cereals sold per farm, for instance, would exclude about half the EEC's farmers from this tax, which is intended to contribute to the cost of disposing of surplus production, mainly through subsidised exports. The ewe premium would only be paid on the first 500 head in any flock, while for beef the premium (deductible from the intervention buying would be replaced by a headage payment on the first 50 in any herd.

But speaking at Agra Europe's Agricultural Outlook Conference in London last week Mr Peter Pooley, deputy director of agriculture at the Commission, denied that the proposals were discriminatory. He claimed that the rules of the Community forbade discrimination but said nothing about selectivity. All farmers, he said, would get premiums for 50 cattle, whether they had 50 or 300. This principle would support the great majority of "real farmers on family units while not overrewarding much larger farmers."

Opening the conference Mr Michael Jopling, the UK Farm Minister, suggested that concern for the smaller farmer

was really an extension of social policy and as such should be the national responsibility, not laid on consumers and taxpayers through the Common Agricultural Policy. He also repeated that price restraint was in his opinion, the only cure for overproduction. Mr Jopling may find he has few supporters in the Council of Agriculture Ministers, however. The majority of his fellow ministers will probably agree in this instance with the Commission—mainly because of the small-farmer elements dominant in their home constituencies.

But the core of the proposals is in what they would do to farm output prices. In this respect Mr Jopling should be happy because, by my reading, they will certainly reduce them.

Take cereals first. A 3 per cent co-responsibility levy is proposed for grain sales. It is not clear yet if it would be paid by the farmer or the buyer, though it will most probably be the farmer, if the milk co-responsibility levy is anything to go by. At 3 per cent the levy would amount to a minimum of £3.30 a tonne. Then the opening of intervention buying would be put back by four months—from August to December. This would seriously affect farmers who have to sell early for financial or other reasons (lack

of storage space for instance). According to the Ministry's grain movement statistics the bulk of UK intervention offers and sales take place by the end of November. Under the proposals there would be no support in the market for the early post-harvest months.

In addition there is a proposal for intervention standards to be tightened. The minimum specific weight for wheat would be raised by 5.3 per cent and that for barley by 6.25 per cent. Allowable moisture content would be reduced to less than 14 per cent. Specific weights being a climatically-induced factor, had these standards been in force during last year's harvest very little UK grain would have been accepted into intervention stores. Moisture content, however, can be controlled by the farmer's drier.

Further criteria are proposed which will, as far as can be understood, mean that only wheat of milling quality would be accepted. These include a protein standard and Hagberg (millability) and machinability tests. Offers would be graded and total deductions could amount to £5 a tonne, while some grain could be rejected outright. The sum of all these criteria could, according to the NFU, mean a fall in returns from grain of about 12 per cent, or £30 an acre on an average wheat crop.

The main concern for British farmers is the post-harvest grain market. Should there be a better yield than last year's there could well be 4m or 5m tonnes more grain to be disposed of than in 1985, when 2m tonnes of wheat and barley were sold in to UK intervention. That would place immense pressure on the market, aggravated by the effects of the new standards and export prospects would be minimal.

The loss of the beef premium would only be partly recouped from the headage payments, while the removal of intervention buying would do nothing for farmer's confidence in the long term planning needed in beef production. The same "small is beautiful" policy of restricting the ewe headage premium to the first 500 head in a flock would mainly affect UK lowland farmers.

The only part of the package likely to reduce the build up of surplus mountains is the proposed buy-out of up to 3 per cent of milk quotas. But is questionable if many UK dairy farmers would sell voluntarily, as the other options for land use are threatened by the new moves.

The whole thrust of the new proposals does justify the fears expressed by farmers and the Minister that they are discriminatory against UK interests. They are unlikely to persuade many farmers to produce less because containing fixed and variable costs in a falling market can only be achieved through increasing output. For individual farmers to cut back production in these circumstances is the road to financial disaster.

## LONDON MARKETS

THE REVIVAL in coffee futures prices which began a week ago was maintained yesterday as the May position put on another \$55 to \$2,557.50 a tonne. May coffee has now recovered \$330 of the \$1,000 it lost in a reaction against the rise which peaked in early January. Dealers said the London market was basically featureless yesterday with virtually all the upward impetus coming from the New York market. The cocoa market, which last week fell to the lowest level since early December, lost further ground yesterday as sterling firmed. But nearby values firmed off the lows with the May quotation closing at \$1,669 a tonne, down \$5.50 on the day. On the London Metal Exchange aluminium prices declined on disappointment at the International Primary Aluminium Institute's December stocks figures, which showed a smaller decline than had been expected. Cash aluminium ended the day \$15.50 down at \$789 a tonne.

LME prices supplied by Amalgamated Metal Trading.

Unofficial + or -	High/Low
Cash	785.5-8 - 15.5 791.790
5 months	810.5-7 - 14.75 833.310
Official closing (am): Cash 785.5-8 (784.5), three months 820.1 (822.5), settlement 784.5 (784.5). Final Korb Close: 784.5. Turnover: 31,400 tonnes.	

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5 months	810.5-7 - 14.75 833.310
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## COPPER

Unofficial + or -	High/Low
Cash	895.5-6 + 1.0 915.450
3 months	924.5-5 - 1.5 952.100
Official closing (am): Cash 895.5-6 (894.5), three months 924.5 (923.5), settlement 894.5 (894.5). Final Korb Close: 894.5. Turnover: 9,100 tonnes. US Spot: 18-23 cents per pound.	

## LEAD

Unofficial + or -	High/Low
Cash	258.80 + 1.25 259
3 months	258.70 + 1.25 259.950
Official closing (am): Cash 258.80 (258.5), three months 258.70 (258.5), settlement 258.5 (258.5). Final Korb Close: 258.5. Turnover: 7,100 tonnes. US Spot: 18-23 cents per pound.	

## NICKEL

Unofficial + or -	High/Low
Cash	2780-10 - 30 2800/2850
3 months	2880-10 - 11.0 2890/2950
Official closing (am): Cash 2780-10 (2770-40), three months 2880-10 (2870-40), settlement 2880-10 (2870-40). Final Korb Close: 2880-10. Turnover: 678 tonnes.	

## ZINC

Unofficial + or -	High/Low
Cash	498.5-9.4 - 11.1 513.5/512
3 months	528-7 - 14.75 543.3/540
Official closing (am): Cash 498.5-9.4 (497-40), three months 528-7 (525-40), settlement 498.5-9.4 (497-40). Final Korb Close: 498.5-9.4. Turnover: 14,200 tonnes. US Prime Western: 21.50-32.75 cents per pound.	

## GOLD

Gold rose \$3 to \$339.340 in quiet trading on the London market yesterday. It opened at \$340.30 and was fixed at \$340.50 in the morning and \$340.15 in the afternoon. The metal touched a peak of \$341.41 and closed at the day's low.

Close	High/Low
March	339.340
April	339.340
May	339.340
June	339.340
July	339.340
August	339.340
September	339.340
October	339.340
November	339.340
December	339.340

## COLD AND PLATINUM COINS

Close	High/Low
March	339.340
April	339.340
May	339.340
June	339.340
July	339.340
August	339.340
September	339.340
October	339.340
November	339.340
December	339.340

## SILVER

Silver was fixed 4.15p on ounce higher for spot delivery on the London market yesterday at \$22.65p. It opened at \$22.65p and was fixed at \$22.65p in the morning and \$22.65p in the afternoon. The metal touched a peak of \$22.65p and closed at the day's low.

Close	High/Low
March	22.65p
April	22.65p
May	22.65p
June	22.65p
July	22.65p
August	22.65p
September	22.65p
October	22.65p
November	22.65p
December	22.65p

## MEAT

Beef prices opened on a steadier note but ended on a weaker note as the leading beef prices closed 1.5p on the close. Pigmeat closed unchanged in small lots and 1.5p higher in large lots. A little steady, reports Eastern Capital.

Close	High/Low
March	113.50
April	113.50
May	113.50
June	113.50
July	113.50
August	113.50
September	113.50
October	113.50
November	113.50
December	113.50

## FISH

Business done: Whiting Mar 118.40-0.20, May 118.40-0.20, July 122.70-1.25, Sep 122.70-1.25, Nov 122.70-1.25, Dec 122.70-1.25. Sole Mar 118.40-0.20, May 118.40-0.20, July 122.70-1.25, Sep 122.70-1.25, Nov 122.70-1.25, Dec 122.70-1.25. Mackerel Mar 118.40-0.20, May 118.40-0.20, July 122.70-1.25, Sep 122.70-1.25, Nov 122.70-1.25, Dec 122.70-1.25.

London Grains—Wheat US dark northern No 1 10 per cent Feb/Mar 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 2 soft red winter 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 3 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 4 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 5 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 6 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 7 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 8 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 9 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 10 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 11 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 12 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 13 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 14 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 15 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 16 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 17 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 18 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 19 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 20 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 21 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 22 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 23 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 24 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 25 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 26 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 27 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 28 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 29 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 30 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 31 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 32 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 33 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 34 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 35 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 36 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 37 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 38 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 39 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 40 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 41 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 42 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 43 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 44 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 45 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 46 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 47 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 48 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 49 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 50 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 51 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 52 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 53 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 54 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 55 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 56 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 57 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 58 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 59 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 60 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 61 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 62 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 63 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 64 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 65 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 66 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 67 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 68 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 69 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 70 yellow 125.50 seller, 125.50 buyer, 125.50. US No 71 yellow







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Stock	High	Low	Yld	Div	Price	Volume	Change
IBM	125.00	124.00	4.00	1.00	124.50	100	+0.50
GE	45.00	44.00	3.00	0.75	44.50	50	+0.50
MSFT	100.00	98.00	5.00	1.50	99.00	200	+1.00
GOOG	250.00	245.00	6.00	2.00	247.50	150	+2.50
AMZN	180.00	175.00	4.00	1.00	177.50	80	+2.50
APPL	150.00	148.00	3.00	0.80	149.00	120	+1.00
ORCL	70.00	68.00	2.00	0.50	69.00	60	+1.00
CRM	120.00	118.00	3.00	0.90	119.00	40	+1.00
ADBE	200.00	195.00	4.00	1.20	197.50	30	+2.50
INTC	35.00	34.00	2.00	0.40	34.50	90	+0.50
QCOM	110.00	108.00	3.00	0.70	109.00	70	+1.00
TXN	90.00	88.00	2.00	0.50	89.00	50	+1.00
AVGO	130.00	128.00	3.00	0.80	129.00	40	+1.00
MRVL	80.00	78.00	2.00	0.40	79.00	60	+1.00
WDC	60.00	58.00	1.00	0.20	59.00	80	+1.00
DELL	40.00	38.00	1.00	0.20	39.00	100	+1.00
HPQ	30.00	28.00	1.00	0.10	29.00	120	+1.00
IBM	125.00	124.00	4.00	1.00	124.50	100	+0.50
GE	45.00	44.00	3.00	0.75	44.50	50	+0.50
MSFT	100.00	98.00	5.00	1.50	99.00	200	+1.00
GOOG	250.00	245.00	6.00	2.00	247.50	150	+2.50
AMZN	180.00	175.00	4.00	1.00	177.50	80	+2.50
APPL	150.00	148.00	3.00	0.80	149.00	120	+1.00
ORCL	70.00	68.00	2.00	0.50	69.00	60	+1.00
CRM	120.00	118.00	3.00	0.90	119.00	40	+1.00
ADBE	200.00	195.00	4.00	1.20	197.50	30	+2.50
INTC	35.00	34.00	2.00	0.40	34.50	90	+0.50
QCOM	110.00	108.00	3.00	0.70	109.00	70	+1.00
TXN	90.00	88.00	2.00	0.50	89.00	50	+1.00
AVGO	130.00	128.00	3.00	0.80	129.00	40	+1.00
MRVL	80.00	78.00	2.00	0.40	79.00	60	+1.00
WDC	60.00	58.00	1.00	0.20	59.00	80	+1.00
DELL	40.00	38.00	1.00	0.20	39.00	100	+1.00
HPQ	30.00	28.00	1.00	0.10	29.00	120	+1.00

<b>REGIONAL &amp; IRISH STOCKS</b>					
The following is a selection of Regional and Irish stocks, the last quoted in Irish currency					
<b>Aluminum Inc 20c</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>Feb. 1976 WFOZ</b>	<b>(Stock)</b>		
<b>Cable &amp; Trust 21c</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>Aercon</b>	<b>235</b>		
<b>Fairfax Plc, 5c</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>CPH Holdings</b>	<b>50</b>		
<b>Mackenzie Ltd 20c</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>Daniel Mann</b>	<b>348</b>		
<b>Met. Ind. Zep</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>De La Harpe</b>	<b>100</b>		
<b>Food 11% + 10c</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>Hill (Ir. G.H.)</b>	<b>55</b>		
<b>IRISH</b>		<b>Heaton Hires</b>	<b>25</b>		
<b>Bank 11% + 10c</b>	<b>557 1/2</b>	<b>Irish Super</b>	<b>100</b>		
<b>Ind. 9% + 90c</b>	<b>552 1/2</b>	<b>United</b>	<b>130</b>		







## CANADA

[illegible]**NEW YORK**

DOW INDEX	1985-86 Since Cmp'n										1885-86				
	Feb. 8	Feb. 9	Feb. 10	Feb. 11	Feb. 12	High	Low	High	Low	Feb. 8	Feb. 9	Feb. 10	Feb. 11	Low	
Industrie	1613.48	1600.89	1568.13	1563.25	1504.37	1815.42	1814.96	1815.43	4.12						
						(2/10/86)	(4/1/86)	(2/10/86)	(2/15/86)						
3mo Bond	86.06	86.19	86.19	86.11	84.94	85.15	87.25								
Transport	762.36	756.66	753.44	765.82	756.38	789.35	868.83	789.36	12.32						
						(4/1/86)	(7/1/86)	(8/1/86)							
Utilities	176.76	176.04	176.65	176.49	176.14	178.96	148.54	176.06	10.51						
						(7/1/86)	(4/1/86)	(7/1/86)	(2/14/86)						
Day's High	1529.88	(1616.91)	1507.66	1576.85	(1587.50)										
STANDARD AND POORS															
Index	1985/86 Since Completion										1985/86				
	Feb 10	Feb 9	Feb 8	Feb 7	Feb 6	Jan 10	High	Low	High	Low	Feb 10	Feb 9	Feb 8	Low	
Industrie	238.34	236.36	234.71	234.38	236.81	233.38	237.82	236.24	237.82	3.82					
							(7/1/86)			(3/8/86)					
3mo Bond	216.85	214.01	212.85	212.39	213.86	211.78	214.58	213.85	214.96	4.60					
							(7/2/86)	(8/1/86)	(7/2/86)	(1/15/82)					
Ind. Div. Yield %															
Int. P/E Ratio															
Gov. Bond Yield															
OTHER LISTED COMPANIES															
Company	1985/86 Since Completion										1985/86				
	Jan 28	Jan 27	Jan 26	Jan 25	Jan 24	Jan 23	High	Low	High	Low	Jan 28	Jan 27	Jan 26	Low	
AUSTRIA															
Alb. Ind. (1/1/86)															
Metals & Min. (1/1/86)															
AUSTRIA															
Credit Agric. (2/1/82)															
BELGIUM															
Brussels (1/1/86)															
DEMARK															
Copenhagen SE (3/1/86)															
FRANCE															
CAC General (3/1/86)															
Int. Tenders (3/1/86)															
GERMANY															
DAX Index (1/1/86)															
Commerzbank (1/1/86)															
HONG KONG															
Nong Sang Bank (1/7/86)															
ITALY															
Borsa Comm. Int. (1/82)															
JAPAN															
Nikkei (1/8/86)															
Tokyo SE (4/7/86)															
NETHERLANDS															
Amst. General (1/1/86)															
Amst. Ind. (1/1/86)															
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LONDON		Chief price changes (In pence unless otherwise indicated)	
RISKS		MEPC	
Tr 8% 87/90	£90 1/4	Mann & Co	312 +14
Tr 13% 00/03	£119 1/4	Metal Box	260 +18
Tr 2% IL 20	£88 1/4	Parkfield Group	275 +35
Aberd. Steak Hse	86 + 7	Poly Peck Int	295 +20
BL	48 +10	Read Int	161 +13
BP	563 +10	Rotork	719 +14
Coats Patons	247 + 9	Sears	133 +14
Colroll	170 +11	Staffs Pott	119 +5 1/2
Commercial U	270 +10	Thorn EMI	94 +20
Custain	488 +16	Trafalgar Int	417 +13
DRG	237 +12	Uni Bisc	322 +13
Dawson Int	218 +10	Wired & Plastic	234 + 6
Executex Cl	93 +13		355 +19
GUS A	800d +48		
Jaguar	473 +38	Inchoape	FALLS
		Vantona Viyel	388 -17
			438 -12

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## NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE COMPOSITE PRICES

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Continued on Page 4



**Prices at 3pm, February 10**[illegible]



# FINANCIAL TIMES

## WORLD STOCK MARKETS

### WALL STREET

## Unbridled surge in confidence

**SURGING CONFIDENCE** kept stocks on Wall Street moving ahead to new peak levels yesterday, writes Terry Byland in New York.

Investors continued to respond to indications of a strengthening US economy, a weakening dollar and to expectations that the inflation rate will remain low. Credit markets were sluggish, however, as hopes of an early cut in the federal discount rate waned ahead of this week's meeting of the Fed's Open Market Committee (FOMC).

At the close the Dow Jones industrial average was 12,96 up at 1,626.38.

The Dow composite and transportation averages, as well as the NYSE composite index, were also at peaks.

Optimistic views of the US economy were strengthened by Friday's news of healthy employment trends. A strengthening economy renders it less likely that the Fed will cut the discount rate. Some Wall Street analysts now forecast that interest rates will be forced higher by mid-year as the economy expands. Credit markets were additionally discouraged by the court ruling against the Gramm-Rudman legislation which will

delay action to cut the federal deficit.

Stock market indices were boosted by the Detroit motor stocks, which responded to the decision of the big three to maintain aggressive output programmes despite indications of slower sales.

General Motors, which is believed to have trimmed production slightly this month, rose \$1½ to \$70½. Chrysler, which has increased production strongly, gained \$1½ to \$50½, and Ford, at \$85, gained \$½.

IBM advanced in good turnover, adding \$1½ to \$157½ and other firm spots among the computer manufacturers included Honeywell, up \$1½ at \$79½.

After confirming trading losses, Commodore International, the personal computer group, remained unchanged at \$6. Apple Computer was also unchanged, at \$24.

The setback to Gramm-Rudman, although now facing appeal to the Supreme Court, favoured defence stocks. General Dynamics, restored to the US Navy's contract bidding lists, gained a further \$1½ to \$73½.

As the enquiry into the shuttle tragedy proceeded, Morton Thiokol stock weakened \$½ to \$33½. Rockwell eased \$½ to \$36½. But Lockheed, chief contractor to the shuttle project, added \$½ to \$47½.

With world oil prices likely to go lower yet, stocks of the oil majors were narrowly mixed. Occidental Petroleum, Dr Armand Hammer's group, \$½ to \$26½ after results. Exxon, at \$50½ was \$½ better, and Standard Oil \$½ up at \$48.

Among the industry service stocks, Schlumberger, which dominates the battered oil search business, edged up \$½ to

\$32½ after confirming poor trading results.

Chemical stocks, which have responded strongly to falling prices for oil feedstocks, edged higher. Dow, still benefiting from results, added \$½ to \$44½. Union Carbide, however, lost \$½ to \$82½.

A weakening dollar brought buyers in for pharmaceuticals. Merck, the industry leader, added \$½ to \$142½, while Upjohn, enjoying another bout of speculative support, bounded up \$1½ to \$134½.

Financial issues remained uncertain after their recent shakeout, unsettled by warnings of the likely effects of tumbling oil prices on Mexico, which is a major debtor. The money centre banks mostly edged higher. Chase Manhattan edged up \$½ to \$72½. But Citicorp shed \$½ to \$48½ and Bankers Trust \$½ to \$36.

A dividend increase from Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing left the stock unchanged at \$94½. Anheuser-Busch, brewer of Budweiser beer, added \$½ to \$42½ after trading results. Anchor Hocking at \$24½ was \$½ off in minimal trading, also after results.

There was a sharp upswing in Walt Disney Productions, on reports of huge box office success for its latest film, Down and Out in Beverly Hills. At \$123½, Disney bounded up \$4½.

Short-term rates made little further move after rising strongly at the end of last week. Federal funds traded comfortably at 7½ per cent, with the market assuming that the FOMC meeting would leave credit policies unchanged.

Bonds edged forward in steady trading as last week's batch of new Treasury securities was absorbed by the market. Retail interest was light but sufficient to take stock off the books of the trading firms.

### EUROPE

## Three more enjoy view from the top

**THE TEMPO** of trading accelerated on the European bourses yesterday, producing record performances in three leading exchanges as a professional buying spree overwhelmed faint-hearted profit-takers.

Paris stood confidently on a new peak after last week's record-setting display. The French market is currently viewed by some, particularly British, investment analysts as having the potential of repeating this year the dazzling aerobatics that Italy offered the international equity market last year.

The handwagon effect, needless to say, has to be distinguished from the genuine investment opportunity while the outcome of the forthcoming elections is not a foregone conclusion.

The CAC General index advanced 3.2 to a record 288.1.

Banks, stores and engineering stocks formed the core of yesterday's buy lists while some discreet selling in foods, which have acted as the cornerstone of much of the recent advance, was detected.

Hachette was one of the session's bright lights with a gain of 8 per cent - FFr 130 - to FFr 1,800 Peugeot, which finished the Friday session with a 12-month high, repeated the performance with a FFr 50 jump - a hefty 7 per cent gain on the day - to a new peak of FFr 776. This is set against data suggesting a contraction in the domestic new car market.

All was not sweetness and light among building issues. Scrag, which has displayed recent volatility, resumed the downward trek with a 9 per cent slump to FFr 107 although Bouygues picked up FFr 5 to FFr 1,040 on the back of last week's results.

Dumez firm FFr 8 to FFr 1,058 amid plans for a one-for-seven scrip issue and a less-than-inspiring hint of flat results for 1985. The group's involvement in the proposed cross-Channel tunnel, although reflected in much of the current strength of its share price, has not appeared on the balance sheet yet.

Among export-heavy blue-chip food and drink shares Pernod Ricard added FFr 23 to FFr 668 and Perrier firm FFr 23 to FFr 504. Moët-Hennessy, the champagne to rebooth group which looks as if it has cornered the market on St Valentine romance, put on FFr 19 to FFr 2,235. The group, which also markets top quality health care products, is now firmly in the upper band of its trading range but still FFr 200 short of its 12-month high.

Other features of a spirited session were a steady Elf Aquitaine at FFr 213

in the face of an unkind oil market which is still under the threat of overproduction and/or slumping prices.

Matra added FFr 40 to FFr 1,600 while Club Med, repeatedly linked recently as a possible takeover/merger candidate with Wagons-Lits of Belgium, dipped FFr 1 to FFr 452.

The record run in Milan took the Banca Commerciale index across the 500 threshold for the first time with a 2.84 jump to 502.40. The steam of the rally was again confined to a small band of international favourites with Fiat topping the industrials list. The car group added to Friday's peak showing with a fresh 1.298 surge to 14,998 compared with its 12-month low of 12,065. In after-bourse trading, prices touched 17,070.

Trust buying and overseas purchase orders swelled demand which also bloated Mediobanca 14,600 to 151,000.

A determined, and not unexpected, foray by profit-takers rattled sentiment a little as it combined with fresh fears of a new short-term political crisis within the Government.

Montedison thus finished only L10 higher at L2,369, just below its 12-month peak, while Olivetti, by now an essential constituent of any foreigner's shopping list, dipped L5 to L10,598.

Among insurers Ras added L775 to L173,975 while Generali was clipped back L500 to L83,500 and Toro slipped L240 to L30,050.

Market interest still remains firm among top-quality equities while second-line issues have yet to enjoy the full flourish of overseas support.

The slightly firmer showing in Brussels was still sufficient to take the Belgian Stock Exchange index to another peak with a 21 point flip to 3,048.54.

Petrofina, the exchange's bellwether, added Bfr 40 to Bfr 6,240 while Wagons-Lits reversed early gains to finish the session Bfr 80 cheaper at Bfr 5,000 on late confirmation that it had agreed to take over the Montparnasse Park hotel in Paris.

The move into secondary issues was noted with Bekeart Bfr 430 higher at Bfr 9,300 on suggestions that the wire products group may be seeking an overseas - US or Tokyo - house listing. Chemicals, often moving parallel with oils, suffered from delayed profit-taking after last week's buying spree. UCB lost Bfr 130 to Bfr 5,960. Solvay surrendered Bfr 90 to Bfr 6,920.

Frankfurt was more preoccupied with the final fling of Carnival than with serious bourse dealing. Ceramics group Rosenthal was one of the few to show signs of coherent life with its DM 17 advance to DM 366 while Deutsche Bank managed a more modest DM 8 rise to DM 799.50. Daimler stalled at DM 1,348 irrespective of its divestiture plans.

A lacklustre bond market saw the Bundesbank buy DM 9.5m of paper compared with Friday's meagre DM 8.5m sale.

Amsterdam finished mixed. Stockholm experienced a wave of buying triggered by lower domestic interest rates while Madrid edged higher in thin trading.

### LONDON

## Blue chips pave path to peaks

**BLUE CHIPS** and situation issues were the centre of attention in London yesterday where the FT-SE 100, which has lagged behind recently in the race to record levels, hit a high of 1,481.5, up 18.1. The FT Ordinary also peaked with a 7.8 rise to 1,187.7.

New investment was encouraged by a reappraisal of the effects of a lower oil price on the economy, hopes of tax cuts in next month's budget and the more remote chance of a reduction in the duty on share trading.

There appeared no shortage of funds despite the Wellcome share issue being 17 times oversubscribed. It attracted a massive £4.5bn.

Takeover targets prospered. Coats Patons gained 9p to 247p, while its sister of two weeks ago, Dawson International added 10p to 218p. However, Vantage Viyella, 12p lower at 438p, seems set to carry off the bride in an agreed deal.

Gifts were strong in a market showing signs of stock shortage.

Chief price changes, Page 43; Details, Page 42; Share information service, Pages 40-41.

### AUSTRALIA

**SCATTERED** industrials and some banks were the main winners after a lifeless day of trading in Sydney yesterday.

The All Ordinaries share index gave up a small 0.5 to 1,068.9 and declines outpaced advances 221 to 219.

After rising sharply for the past two weeks, News Corporation succumbed to a bout of profit-taking to close 30 cents easier at A\$12.20. TNT, the transport group in which News Corporation's Rupert Murdoch has a stake, rose 3 cents to A\$2.92.

In other media issues, Fairfax gained 10 cents to A\$7.60.

BHP was unchanged at A\$7.18 ex-scrip, while Robert Holmes & Co's Bell Resources, which has made a partial takeover bid for BHP, was also unchanged at A\$5.10 ex-scrip.

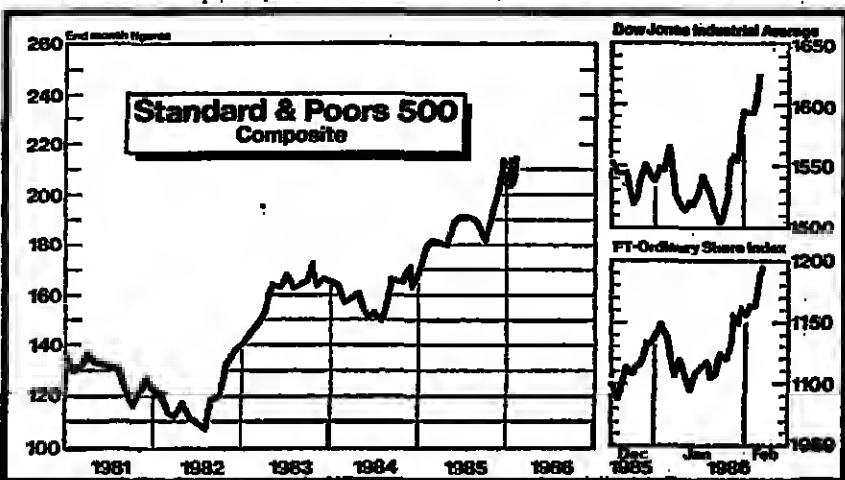
### CANADA

A **MODERATE** easing was evident in Toronto, but most sectors were little changed by mid-session.

Mascot Gold Mines gained 10 cents to C\$4.50 after news that several banks had offered to finance its Nickel Plate gold project in British Columbia.

Among other situation stocks, Carling O'Keefe, which has agreed to import and market in Canada Australia's Fosters Lager, added C\$½ to C\$11½.

### KEY MARKET MONITORS



STOCK MARKET INDICES	Feb 10	Previous	Year ago
NEW YORK			
DJ Industrials	1,618.53	1,613.42	1,289.57
DJ Transport	766.50	762.36	630.06
DJ Utilities	177.11	176.75	160.80
S&P Composite	215.65	214.56	182.19
LONDON			
FT Ord	1,185.3	1,187.7	991.1
FT-SE 100	1,461.5	1,445.0	1,236.3
FT-A All-share	739.37	702.16	622.93
FT-A 500	778.99	770.38	630.71
FT Gold mines	326.3	322.0	391.1
FT-A Long gilt	10.53	10.64	10.73

TOKYO	Feb 10	Previous	Year ago
Nikkei	13,226.07	13,212.13	12,009.0
Tokyo SE	1,056.90	1,055.50	924.45
AUSTRALIA			
All Ord.	1,068.9	1,068.4	772.8
Metals & Mins.	520.0	524.0	439.5
AUSTRIA			
Credit Aktien	117.96	118.17	62.30
BELGIUM			
Belgian SE	3,048.54	3,027.54	2,157.4

CANADA	Feb 10	Previous	Year ago
Toronto			
Metals & Mins	2,213.50	2,227.57	2,183.00
Composite	2,785.8	2,798.8	2,512.9
Montreal			
Portfolio	136.77	137.20	131.67
DENMARK			
SE	227.12	227.61	173.11

FRANCE	Feb 10	Previous	Year ago
CAC Gen	288.1	284.9	199.9
Ind. Tendance	108.7	107.8	70.4
WEST GERMANY			
FAZ-Aktien	669.75	671.29	400.84
Commerzbank	2,031.1	2,031.1	1,162.6
HONG KONG			
Hang Seng	1,734.04	1,747.88	

ITALY	Feb 10	Previous	Year ago
Banca Com.	502.4	499.76	271.52
NETHERLANDS			
ANP-CBS Gen	256.2	255.1	198.6
ANP-CBS Ind	246.9	246.9	158.5
NORWAY			
Oslo SE	382.11	378.86	345.6
SINGAPORE			
Straits Times	611.33	611.33	817.51

SOUTH AFRICA	Feb 10	Previous	Year ago
JSE Golds	1,215.6	1,215.6	907.1
JSE Industrials	1,066.5	1,066.5	862.8
SPAIN			
Madrid SE	110.39	110.06	82.77
SWEDEN			
J & P	1,861.9	1,840.8	1,484.5

SWITZERLAND	Feb 10	Previous	Year ago
Swiss Bank Ind.	584.1	584.1	418.5
WORLD			
MS Capital Int'l	263.7	262.8	196.7

COMMODITIES	Feb 10	Previous	Year ago
(London)			
Silver (spot fixing)	422.65p	418.50p	
Copper (cash)	£296.00	£294.50	
Coffee (MEX)	£2,507.50	£2,435.00	
Oil (spot Arabian Light)	n/a	n/a	

GOLD (per ounce)	Feb 10	Previous	Year ago
London	\$340.00	\$336.50	
Zurich	\$340.25	\$337.75	
Paris (fixing)	\$341.19	\$339.25	
Luxembourg	\$338.50	\$337.60	
New York (April)	\$340.80	\$342.50	

### TOKYO

## Record run unbroken on fifth day

**SPECULATIVE BUYING**, especially of lower-priced issues, sent prices to their fifth consecutive record as investors scurried to make purchases before today's national holiday, writes Shigeo Nishikawa of Jiji Press.

The Nikkei average added 13.94 to 13,226.07 for its eighth straight daily gain on volume of 400m shares, down slightly from last Friday's 421m. Advances led declines 414 to 410, with 143 issues unchanged.

Electric powers and oils were popular as the issues are expected to benefit from the Chinese new year holiday.

Both Hong Kong and Singapore were closed for the Chinese new year holiday.

from the yen's rise against the US dollar. But the uptrend tapered off later on profit-taking.

Tokyo Electric Power firmed Y30 at one stage but ended unchanged from last Friday at Y2,920. Other powers and gases also lost popularity in late trading. Nippon Oil remained in favour, climbing Y21 to Y887 with the second highest volume of 14.49m shares traded. Mitsubishi Petrochemical, the busiest with 16.88m shares, advanced Y28 to Y553 on lower naphtha prices which have resulted from the yen's strength and cheaper oil prices.

With the exception of these issues, trading focused on lower-priced issues for quick profits. Janome Sewing Machine plunged to Y843, but surged a maximum Y100 to Y940 at the end of the session. The upsurge was triggered by rumours that IBM of the US had bought shares in the company.

Miyoshi Oil and Fat put on Y39 to Y396 on heavy speculative buying in the hope of lower import prices of materials. Nippon Electric Pipe soared a maximum Y80 to Y501, again on speculative buying.

Elsewhere, Mitsui Mining gained Y32 to Y703, Sekisui Sangyo Y28 to Y398, Chubu Pulp Y51 to Y539, Tokai Hotel Y35 to Y865, Nippon Stainless Steel Y74 to Y421 and Tokai Car Y44 to Y394.

Blue chips remained out of favour, with a few exceptions. Kirin Brewery added Y19 to Y442 as demand for beer recovered and JVC surged Y50 to Y2,410 after sales of video cassette recorders (VCRs) rose.

Little interest was shown in large-capital and biotechnology-related stocks. Bonds stayed weak in early trading but firmed slightly towards the close on speculative buying by banks and securities companies, sparked by the yen's climb above the psychological barrier of 190 to the dollar in late trading on the Tokyo Foreign Exchange Market.


The yield on the benchmark 6.2 per cent government bond due in July 1995 rose from 5.840 per cent to 5.670 per cent. The rate on the 8.5 per cent government bond maturing in December 1995 went up from 5.680 per cent to 5.735 per cent but dropped later to 5.670 per cent, reflecting brisk inter-broker trading.

### SOUTH AFRICA

**THE SHARP** drop in the value of the rand only served to boost prices in Johannesburg yesterday.

Gold, reacting to the firmer bullion price - gold breached \$340 an ounce - showed solid advances. Among the more expensive issues, Buffelsfontein rose R1.50 to R75, Free State Geduld added R1.75 to R68.75 and Driefontein gained R1.25 to R53.25.

Nedbank, South Africa's third largest banking group, ended unchanged at R9 despite news that its chief executive has resigned and the bank plans a rights issue to restructure its capital.



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